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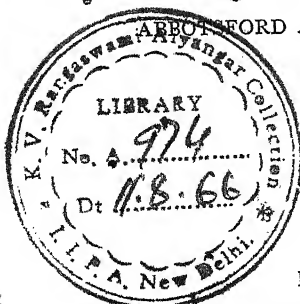
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BRACEBRIDGE HALL.

ARROT FORD AND NEWSTEAD ABBEY.



LONDON:

BELL & DALDY, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

1868.

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BRACEBRIDGE HALL;

OR,

THE HUMORISTS.

A Medley.

BY GEOFFREY CRAYON.

"Under this cloud I walk, Gentlemen, pardon my rude assault. I am a traveller, who, having surveyed most of the terrestrial angles of the globe, am hither arrived, to peruse this little spot."—CHRISTMAS ORDINARY.

AUTHOR'S REVISED EDITION.

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THE AUTHOR.

WORTHY READER!

On again taking pen in hand, I would fain make a few observations on the outset, by way of bespeaking a right understanding. The volumes which I have already published have met with a reception far beyond my most sanguine expectations. I would willingly attribute this to their intrinsic merits; but, in spite of the vanity of authorship, I cannot but be sensible that their success has, in a great measure, been owing to a less flattering cause. It has been a matter of marvel, that a man from the wilds of America should express himself in tolerable English. I was looked upon as something new and strange in literature; a kind of demi-savage, with a feather in his hand, instead of on his head; and there was a curiosity to hear what such a being had to say about civilized society.

This novelty is now at an end, and of course the feeling of indulgence which it produced. I must now expect to bear the scrutiny of sterner criticism, and to be measured by the same standard with contemporary writers; and the very favour which has been shown to my previous writings, will cause these to be treated with the greater rigour, as there is nothing for which the world is apt to punish a man more severely, than for having been over-praised. On this head, therefore, I wish to forestall the censoriousness of the reader; and I entreat he will not think the worse of me for the many injudicious things that may have been said in my commendation.

I am aware that I often travel over beaten ground, and treat of subjects that have already been discussed by abler pens. Indeed, various authors have been mentioned as my models, to whom I should feel flattered if I thought I bore the slightest resemblance; but in truth I write after no model that I am conscious of—I write with no idea of imitation or competition. In venturing occasionally on topics that have already

been almost exhausted by English authors, I do it, not with the presumption of challenging a comparison, but with the hope that some new interest may be given to such topics, when discussed by the pen of a stranger.

If, therefore, I should sometimes be found dwelling with fondness on subjects that are trite and common-place with the reader, I beg the circumstances under which I write may be kept in recollection. Having been born and brought up in a new country, yet educated from infancy in the literature of an old one, my mind was early filled with historical and poetical associations, connected with places, and manners, and customs of Europe; but which could rarely be applied to those of my own country. To a mind thus peculiarly prepared, the most ordinary objects and scenes, on arriving in Europe, are full of strange matter and interesting novelty. England is as classic ground to an American as Italy is to an Englishman; and old London teems with as much historical association as mighty Rome.

Indeed, it is difficult to describe the whimsical medley of ideas that throng upon his mind on landing among English scenes. He, for the first time, sees a world about which he has been reading and thinking in every stage of his existence. The recollected ideas of infancy, youth, and manhood; of the nursery, the school, and the study, come swarming at once upon him; and his attention is distracted between great and little objects; each of which, perhaps, awakens an equally delightful train of remembrances.

But what more especially attracts his notice are those peculiarities which distinguish an old country and an old state of society from a new one. I have never yet grown familiar enough with the crumbling monuments of past ages, to blunt the intense interest with which I at first beheld them. Accustomed always to scenes where history was, in a manner, in anticipation; where everything in art was new and progressive, and pointed to the future rather than to the past; where, in short, the works of man gave no ideas but those of young existence, and prospective improvement; there was something inexpressibly touching in the sight of enormous piles of architecture, gray with antiquity, and sinking to decay. I cannot describe the mute but deep-felt enthusiasm with which I have contemplated a vast monastic ruin, like Tintern Abbey, buried in the bosom of a quiet valley, and shut up from the world, as

though it had existed merely for itself; or a warrior pile, like Conway Castle, standing in stern loneliness on its rocky height, a mere hollow yet threatening phantom of departed power. They spread a grand and melancholy, and, to me, an unusual charm over the landscape; I for the first time beheld signs of national old age, and empire's decay, and proofs of the transient and perishing glories of art, amidst the ever-springing and reviving fertility of nature.

But, in fact, everything to me was full of matter; the footsteps of history were everywhere to be traced; and poetry had breathed over and sanctified the land. I experienced the delightful freshness of feeling of a child, to whom every thing is new. I pictured to myself a set of inhabitants and a mode of life for every habitation that I saw, from the aristocratical mansion, amidst the lordly repose of stately groves and solitary parks, to the straw-thatched cottage, with its scanty garden and its cherished woodbine. I thought I never could be sated with the sweetness and freshness of a country so completely carpeted with verdure; where every air breathed of the balmy pasture and the honeysuckled hedge. I was continually coming upon some little document of poetry in the blossomed hawthorn, the daisy, the cowslip, the primrose, or some other simple object that has received a supernatural value from the muse. The first time that I heard the song of the nightingale, I was intoxicated more by the delicious crowd of remembered associations than by the melody of its notes; and I shall never forget the thrill of ecstasy with which I first saw the lark rise, almost from beneath my feet, and wing its musical flight up into the morning sky.

In this way I traversed England, a grown-up child, delighted by every object great and small; and betraying a wondering ignorance, and simple enjoyment, that provoked many a stare and a smile from my wiser and more experienced fellow-travellers. Such, too, was the odd confusion of associations that kept breaking upon me as I first approached London. One of my earliest wishes had been to see this great metropolis. I had read so much about it in the earliest books that had been put into my infant hands; and I had heard so much about it from those around me who had come from the "old countries." I was familiar with the names of its streets and squares, and public places, before I knew those of my native city. It was to me, the great centre of the world, round

which every thing seemed to revolve. I recollect contemplating so wistfully, when a boy, a paltry little print of the Thames and London Bridge, and St. Paul's, that was in front of an old magazine; and a picture of Kensington Gardens, with gentlemen in three-cornered hats and broad skirts, and ladies in hoops and lappets, that hung up in my bed-room; even the venerable cut of St. John's Gate, that has stood, time out of mind, in front of the Gentleman's Magazine, was not without its charms to me; and I envied the odd-looking little men that appeared to be loitering about its arches.

How then did my heart warm when the towers of Westminster Abbey were pointed out to me, rising above the rich groves of St. James's Park, with a thin blue haze about their gray pinnacles! I could not behold this great mausoleum of what is most illustrious in our paternal history, without feeling my enthusiasm in a glow. With what eagerness did I explore every part of the metropolis! I was not content with those matters which occupy the dignified research of the learned traveller; I delighted to call up all the feelings of childhood, and to seek after those objects which had been the wonders of my infancy. London Bridge, so famous in nursery song; the far-famed Monument; Gog and Magog, and the Lions in the Tower, all brought back many a recollection of infantine delight, and of good old beings, now no more, who had gossiped about them to my wondering ear. Nor was it without a recurrence of childish interest that I first peeped into Mr. Newberry's shop in St. Paul's Churchyard, that fountain-head of literature. Mr. Newberry was the first that ever filled my infant mind with the idea of a great and good man. He published all the picture-books of the day; and, out of his abundant love for children, he charged "nothing for either paper or print, and only a penny-halfpenny for the binding!"

I have mentioned these circumstances, worthy reader, to show you the whimsical crowd of associations that are apt to beset my mind on mingling among English scenes. I hope they may, in some measure, plead my apology, should I be found harping upon stale or trivial themes, or indulging an over-fondness for anything antique and obsolete. I know it is the humour, not to say cant, of the day, to run riot about old times, old books, old customs, and old buildings; with

myself, however, as far as I have caught the contagion, the feeling is genuine. To a man from a young country all old things are in a manner new; and he may surely be excused in being a little curious about antiquities, whose native land, unfortunately, cannot boast of a single ruin.

Having been brought up, also, in the comparative simplicity of a republic, I am apt to be struck with even the ordinary circumstances incident to an aristocratical state of society. If, however, I should at any time amuse myself by pointing out some of the eccentricities, and some of the political characteristics of the latter, I would not be understood as pretending to decide upon its political merits. My only aim is to paint characters and manners. I am no politician. The more I have considered the study of politics, the more I have found it full of perplexity; and I have contented myself, as I have in my religion, with the faith in which I was brought up, regulating my own conduct by my precepts; but leaving to abler heads the task of making converts.

I shall continue on, therefore, in the course I have hitherto pursued; looking at things poetically, rather than politically; describing them as they are, rather than pretending to point out how they should be; and endeavouring to see the world in as pleasant a light as circumstances will permit.

I have always had an opinion that much good might be done by keeping mankind in good humour with one another. I may be wrong in my philosophy, but I shall continue to practise it until convinced of its fallacy. When I discover the world to be all that it has been represented by sneering cynics and whining poets, I will turn to and abuse it also; in the meanwhile, worthy reader, I hope you will not think lightly of me, because I cannot believe this to be so very bad a world as it is represented.

Thine truly

GEOFFREY CRAYON.

THE HALL.

The ancientest house, and the best for housekeeping in this county or the next, and though the master of it write but squire, I know no lord like him.

MERRY BEGGARS.

THE reader, if he has perused the volumes of the Sketch Book, will probably recollect something of the Bracebridge family, with which I once passed a Christmas. I am now on another visit at the Hall, having been invited to a wedding which is shortly to take place. The squire's second son, Guy, a fine, spirited young captain in the army, is about to be married to his father's ward, the fair Julia Templeton. A gathering of relations and friends has already commenced, to celebrate the joyful occasion; for the old gentleman is an enemy to quiet, private weddings. "There is nothing," he says, "like launching a young couple gaily, and cheering them from the shore; a good outset is half the voyage."

Before proceeding any further, I would beg that the squire might not be confounded with that class of hard-riding, fox-hunting gentlemen so often described, and, in fact, so nearly extinct in England. I use this rural title, partly because it is his universal appellation throughout the neighbourhood, and partly because it saves me the frequent repetition of his name, which is one of those rough old English names at which Frenchmen exclaim in despair.

The squire is, in fact, a lingering specimen of the old English country gentleman; rusticated a little by living almost entirely on his estate, and something of a humourist, as Englishmen are apt to become when they have an opportunity of living in their own way. I like his hobby passing well, however, which is, a bigoted devotion to old English manners and customs; it jumps a little with my own humour, having as yet a lively and unsated curiosity about the ancient and genuine characteristics of my "father-land."

There are some traits about the squire's family also, which appear to me to be national. It is one of those old aristocratical families, which, I believe, are peculiar to England, and scarcely understood in other countries; that is to say, families of the ancient gentry, who, though destitute of titled rank, maintain a high ancestral pride; who look down upon all nobility of recent creation, and would consider it a sacrifice

of dignity to merge the venerable name of their house in a modern title.

This feeling is very much fostered by the importance which they enjoy on their hereditary domains. The family mansion is an old manor-house, standing in a retired and beautiful part of Yorkshire. Its inhabitants have been always regarded through the surrounding country, as "the great ones of the earth;" and the little village near the hall looks up to the squire with almost feudal homage. An old manor-house, and an old family of this kind, are rarely to be met with at the present day; and it is probably the peculiar humour of the squire that has retained this secluded specimen of English housekeeping in something like the genuine old style.

I am again quartered in the pannelled chamber, in the antique wing of the house. The prospect from my window, however, has quite a different aspect from that which it wore on my winter visit. Though early in the month of April, yet a few warm, sunshiny days have drawn forth the beauties of the spring, which, I think, are always most captivating on their first opening. The parterres of the old-fashioned garden are gay with flowers; and the gardener has brought out his exotics, and placed them along the stone balustrades. The trees are clothed with green buds and tender leaves; when I throw open my jingling casement, I smell the odour of mignonette, and hear the hum of the bees from the flowers against the sunny wall, with the varied song of the throstle, and the cheerful notes of the tuneful little wren.

While sojourning in this strong-hold of old fashions, it is my intention to make occasional sketches of the scenes and characters before me. I would have it understood, however, that I am not writing a novel, and have nothing of intricate plot, or marvellous adventure, to promise the reader. The Hall of which I treat, has, for aught I know, neither trap-door, nor sliding-pannel, nor donjon-keep: and indeed appears to have no mystery about it. The family is a worthy, well-meaning family, that, in all probability, will eat and drink, and go to bed, and get up regularly, from one end of my work to the other; and the squire is so kind-hearted an old gentleman, that I see no likelihood of his throwing any kind of distress in the way of the approaching nuptials. In a word, I cannot foresee a single extraordinary event that is likely to occur in the whole term of my sojourn at the Hall.

I tell this honestly to the reader, lest, when he find me dallying along, through every-day English scenes, he may hurry a-head, in hopes of meeting with some marvellous adventure farther on. I invite him, on the contrary, to ramble gently on with me, as he would saunter out into the fields, stopping occasionally to gather a flower, or listen to a bird, or admire a prospect, without any anxiety to arrive at the end of his career. Should I, however, in the course of my loiterings about this old mansion, see or hear anything curious, that might serve to vary the monotony of this every-day life, I shall not fail to report it for the reader's entertainment.

For freshest wits I know will soon be wearie
Of any book, how grave so e'er it be,
Except it have odd matter, strange and merrie,
Well sauc'd with lies and glared all with glee.*

THE BUSY MAN.

A decayed gentleman, who lives most upon his own mirth and my master's means, and much good do him with it. He does hold my master up with his stories, and songs, and catches, and such tricks, and jigs, you would admire—he is with him now.

JOVIAL CREW.

By no one has my return to the Hall been more heartily greeted than by Mr. Simon Bracebridge, or Master Simon, as the squire most commonly calls him. I encountered him just as I entered the park, where he was breaking a pointer, and he received me with all the hospitable cordiality with which a man welcomes a friend to another one's house. I have already introduced him to the reader as a brisk old bachelor-looking little man; the wit and superannuated beau of a large family connexion, and the squire's factotum. I found him, as usual, full of bustle; with a thousand petty things to do, and persons to attend to, and in chirping good-humour; for there are few happier beings than a busy idler; that is to say, a man who is eternally busy about nothing.

I visited him, the morning after my arrival, in his chamber, which is in a remote corner of the mansion, as he says he likes to be to himself, and out of the way. He has fitted it

* Mirror for Magistrates.

up in his own taste, so that it is a perfect epitome of an old bachelor's notions of convenience and arrangement. The furniture is made up of odd pieces from all parts of the house, chosen on account of their suiting his notions, or fitting some corner of his apartment; and he is very eloquent in praise of an ancient elbow chair, from which he takes occasion to digress into a censure on modern chairs, as having degenerated from the dignity and comfort of high-backed antiquity.

Adjoining to his room is a small cabinet, which he calls his study. Here are some hanging shelves, of his own construction, on which are several old works on hawking, hunting, and farriery, and a collection or two of poems and songs of the reign of Elizabeth, which he studies out of compliment to the squire; together with the Novelists' Magazine, the Sporting Magazine, the Racing Calendar, a volume or two of the Newgate Calendar, a book of peerage, and another of heraldry.

His sporting dresses hang on pegs in a small closet; and about the walls of his apartment are hooks to hold his fishing-tackle, whips, spurs, and a favourite fowling-piece, curiously wrought and inlaid, which he inherits from his grandfather. He has also a couple of old single-keyed flutes, and a fiddle, which he has repeatedly patched and mended himself, affirming it to be a veritable Cremona: though I have never heard him extract a single note from it that was not enough to make one's blood run cold.

From this little nest his fiddle will often be heard, in the stillness of mid-day, drowsily sawing some long-forgotten tune; for he prides himself on having a choice collection of good old English music, and will scarcely have anything to do with modern composers. The time, however, at which his musical powers are of most use, is now and then of an evening, when he plays for the children to dance in the hall, and he passes among them and the servants for a perfect Orpheus.

His chamber also bears evidence of his various avocations; there are half-copied sheets of music; designs for needle-work; sketches of landscapes, very indifferently executed; a camera lucida; a magic lantern, for which he is endeavouring to paint glasses; in a word, it is the cabinet of a man of many accomplishments, who knows a little of every thing, and does nothing well.

After I had spent some time in his apartment, admiring

the ingenuity of his small inventions, he took me about the establishment, to visit the stables, dog-kennel, and other dependencies, in which he appeared like a general visiting the different quarters of his camp; as the squire leaves the control of all these matters to him, when he is at the Hall. He inquired into the state of the horses; examined their feet; prescribed a drench for one, and bleeding for another; and then took me to look at his own horse, on the merits of which he dwelt with great prolixity, and which, I noticed, had the best stall in the stable.

After this I was taken to a new toy of his and the squire's, which he termed the falconry, where there were several unhappy birds in durance, completing their education. Among the number was a fine falcon, which Master Simon had in especial training, and he told me that he would show me, in a few days, some rare sport of the good old-fashioned kind. In the course of our round, I noticed that the grooms, gamekeeper, whippers-in, and other retainers, seemed all to be on somewhat of a familiar footing with Master Simon, and fond of having a joke with him, though it was evident they had great deference for his opinion in matters relating to their functions.

There was one exception, however, in a testy old huntsman, as hot as a pepper-corn; a meagre, wiry old fellow, in a threadbare velvet jockey-cap, and a pair of leather breeches, that, from much wear, shone as though they had been japanned. He was very contradictory and pragmatical, and apt, as I thought, to differ from Master Simon now and then, out of mere captiousness. This was particularly the case with respect to the treatment of the hawk, which the old man seemed to have under his peculiar care, and, according to Master Simon, was in a fair way to ruin; the latter had a vast deal to say about *casting*, and *imping*, and *gleaming*, and *enseaming*, and giving the hawk the *rangle*, which I saw was all heathen Greck to old Christy; but he maintained his point notwithstanding, and seemed to hold all his technical lore in utter disrespect.

I was surprised at the good humour with which Master Simon bore his contradictions, till he explained the matter to me afterwards. Old Christy is the most ancient servant in the place, having lived among dogs and horses the greater part of a century, and been in the service of Mr. Bracebridge's

father. He knows the pedigree of every horse on the place, and has bestrid the great-great-grandsires of most of them. He can give a circumstantial detail of every fox-hunt for the last sixty or seventy years, and has a history of every stag's head about the house, and every hunting trophy nailed to the door of the dog-kennel.

All the present race have grown up under his eye, and humour him in his old age. He once attended the squire to Oxford when he was a student there, and enlightened the whole university with his hunting lore. All this is enough to make the old man opinionated, since he finds, on all these matters of first-rate importance, he knows more than the rest of the world. Indeed, Master Simon had been his pupil, and acknowledges that he derived his first knowledge in hunting from the instructions of Christy; and I much question whether the old man does not still look upon him as rather a green-horn.

On our return homewards, as we were crossing the lawn in front of the house, we heard the porter's bell ring at the lodge, and shortly afterwards, a kind of cavalcade advanced slowly up the avenue. At sight of it my companion paused, considered for a moment, and then, making a sudden exclamation, hurried away to meet it. As it approached I discovered a fair, fresh-looking elderly lady, dressed in an old-fashioned riding-habit, with a broad-brimmed white beaver hat, such as may be seen in Sir Joshua Reynolds' paintings. She rode a sleek white pony, and was followed by a footman in rich livery, mounted on an over-fed hunter. At a little distance in the rear came an ancient cumbrous chariot, drawn by two very corpulent horses, driven by as corpulent a coachman, beside whom sat a page dressed in a fanciful green livery. Inside of the chariot was a starched prim personage, with a look somewhat between a lady's companion and a lady's maid, and two pampered curs that showed their ugly faces and barked out of each window.

There was a general turning out of the garrison to receive this new comer. The squire assisted her to alight, and saluted her affectionately; the fair Julia flew into her arms, and they embraced with the romantic fervour of boarding-school friends. She was escorted into the house by Julia's lover, towards whom she showed distinguished favour; and a line of the old servants, who had collected in the hall, bowed most profoundly as she passed.

I observed that Master Simon was most assiduous and devout in his attentions upon this old lady. He walked by the side of her pony up the avenue; and, while she was receiving the salutations of the rest of the family, he took occasion to notice the fat coachman, to pat the sleek carriage horses, and, above all, to say a civil word to my lady's gentlewoman, the prim, sour-looking vestal in the chariot.

I had no more of his company for the rest of the morning. He was swept off in the vortex that followed in the wake of this lady. Once indeed he paused for a moment, as he was hurrying on some errand of the good lady's, to let me know that this was Lady Lillycraft, a sister of the squire's, of large fortune, which the captain would inherit, and that her estate lay in one of the best sporting counties in all England.

FAMILY SERVANTS.

Verily old servants are the vouchers of worthy housekeeping. They are like rats in a mansion, or mites in a cheese, bespeaking the antiquity and fatness of their abode.

In my casual anecdotes of the Hall, I may often be tempted to dwell on circumstances of a trite and ordinary nature, from their appearing to me illustrative of genuine national character. It seems to be the study of the squire to adhere, as much as possible, to what he considers the old landmarks of English manners. His servants all understand his ways, and, for the most part, have been accustomed to them from infancy; so that, upon the whole, his household presents one of the few tolerable specimens that can now be met with, of the establishment of an English country gentleman of the old school.

By the by, the servants are not the least characteristic part of the household; the housekeeper, for instance, has been born and brought up at the Hall, and has never been twenty miles from it; yet she has a stately air that would not disgrace a lady that had figured at the court of Queen Elizabeth.

I am half inclined to think that she has caught it from living so much among the old family pictures. It may, however, be owing to a consciousness of her importance in the sphere in which she has always moved; for she is greatly respected in the neighbouring village, and among the farmers

wives, and has high authority in the household, ruling over the servants with quiet but undisputed sway.

She is a thin old lady, with blue eyes, and pointed nose and chin. Her dress is always the same as to fashion. She wears a small, well-starched ruff, a laced stomacher, full petticoats, and a gown festooned and open in front, which, on particular occasions, is of ancient silk, the legacy of some former dame of the family, or an inheritance from her mother, who was housekeeper before her. I have a reverence for these old garments, as I make no doubt they have figured about these apartments in days long past, when they have set off the charms of some peerless family beauty; and I have sometimes looked from the old housekeeper to the neighbouring portraits, to see whether I could not recognize her antiquated brocade in the dress of some one of those long-waisted dames that smile on me from the walls.

Her hair, which is quite white, is frizzed out in front, and she wears over it a small cap, nicely plaited, and brought down under the chin. Her manners are simple and primitive, heightened a little by a proper dignity of station.

The Hall is her world, and the history of the family the only history she knows, excepting that which she has read in the Bible. She can give a biography of every portrait in the picture gallery, and is a complete family chronicle.

She is treated with great consideration by the squire. Indeed, Master Simon tells me that there is a traditional anecdote current among the servants, of the squire's having been seen kissing her in the picture gallery, when they were both young. As, however, nothing further was ever noticed between them, the circumstance caused no great scandal; only she was observed to take to reading Pamela shortly afterwards, and refused the hand of the village innkeeper, whom she had previously smiled on.

The old butler, who was formerly footman, and a rejected admirer of hers, used to tell the anecdote now and then, at those little cabals that will occasionally take place among the most orderly servants, arising from the common propensity of the governed to talk against administration; but he has left it off, of late years, since he has risen into place, and shakes his head rebukingly when it is mentioned.

It is certain that the old lady will, to this day, dwell on the looks of the squire when he was a young man at college; and

she maintains that none of his sons can compare with their father when he was of their age, and was dressed out in his full suit of scarlet, with his hair craped and powdered, and his three-cornered hat.

She has an orphan niece, a pretty, soft-hearted baggage, named Phœbe Wilkins, who has been transplanted to the Hall within a year or two, and been nearly spoiled for any condition of life. She is a kind of attendant and companion of the fair Julia's; and from loitering about the young lady's apartments, reading scraps of novels, and inheriting second-hand finery, has become something between a waiting-maid and a slip-shod fine lady.

She is considered a kind of heiress among the servants, as she will inherit all her aunt's property; which, if report be true, must be a round sum of good golden guineas, the accumulated wealth of two housekeepers' savings; not to mention the hereditary wardrobe, and the many little valuables and knick-knacks treasured up in the housekeeper's room. Indeed the old housekeeper has the reputation among the servants and the villagers of being passing rich; and there is a japanned chest of drawers and a large iron-bound coffer in her room, which are supposed by the housemaids to hold treasures of wealth.

The old lady is a great friend of Master Simon, who, indeed, pays a little court to her, as to a person high in authority: and they have many discussions on points of family history, in which, notwithstanding his extensive information, and pride of knowledge, he commonly admits her superior accuracy. He seldom returns to the Hall, after one of his visits to the other branches of the family, without bringing Mrs. Wilkins some remembrance from the ladies of the house where he has been staying.

Indeed all the children in the house look up to the old lady with habitual respect and attachment, and she seems almost to consider them as her own, from their having grown up under her eye. The Oxonian, however, is her favourite, probably from being the youngest, though he is the most mischievous, and has been apt to play tricks upon her from boyhood.

I cannot help mentioning one little ceremony which, I believe, is peculiar to the Hall. After the cloth is removed at dinner, the old housekeeper sails into the room and stands behind the squire's chair, when he fills her a glass of wine

with his own hands, in which she drinks the health of the company in a truly respectful yet dignified manner, and then retires. The squire received the custom from his father, and has always continued it.

There is a peculiar character about the servants of old English families that reside principally in the country. They have a quiet, orderly, respectful mode of doing their duties. They are always neat in their persons, and appropriately, and, if I may use the phrase, technically dressed; they move about the house without hurry or noise; there is nothing of the bustle of employment, or the voice of command; nothing of that obtrusive housewifery that amounts to a torment. You are not persecuted by the process of making you comfortable; yet every thing is done, and is done well. The work of the house is performed as if by magic, but it is the magic of system. Nothing is done by fits and starts, nor at awkward seasons; the whole goes on like well-oiled clockwork, where there is no noise nor jarring in its operations.

English servants, in general, are not treated with great indulgence, nor rewarded by many commendations; for the English are laconic and reserved towards their domestics; but an approving nod and kind word from master or mistress, goes as far here, as an excess of praise or indulgence elsewhere. Neither do servants exhibit any animated marks of affection to their employers; yet though quiet, they are strong in their attachments; and the reciprocal regard of masters or servants, though not ardently expressed, is powerful and lasting in old English families.

The title of "an old family servant" carries with it a thousand kind associations in all parts of the world; and there is no claim upon the home-bred charities of the heart more irresistible than that of having been "born in the house." It is common to see gray-headed domestics of this kind attached to an English family of the "old school," who continue in it to the day of their death, in the enjoyment of steady, unaffected kindness, and the performance of faithful unofficial duty. I think such instances of attachment speak well for master and servant, and the frequency of them speaks well for national character.

These observations, however, hold good only with families of the description I have mentioned, and with such as are somewhat retired, and pass the greater part of their time in

the country. As to the powdered menials that throng the walls of fashionable town residences, they equally reflect the character of the establishments to which they belong: and I know no more complete epitomes of dissolute heartlessness, and pampered inutility.

But the good "old family servant!"—The one who has always been linked, in idea, with the home of our heart; who has led us to school in the days of prattling childhood; who has been the confidant of our boyish cares, and schemes, and enterprizes; who has hailed us as we came home at vacations, and been the promoter of all our holiday sports; who, when we, in wandering manhood, have left the paternal roof, and only return thither at intervals, will welcome us with a joy inferior only to that of our parents; who, now grown gray and infirm with age, still totters about the house of our fathers in fond and faithful servitude; who claims us, in a manner, as his own; and hastens with querulous eagerness to anticipate his fellow domestics in waiting upon us at table; and who, when we retire at night to the chamber that still goes by our name, will linger about the room to have one more kind look, and one more pleasant word about times that are past—who does not experience towards such a being a feeling of almost filial affection?

I have met with several instances of epitaphs on the grave-stones of such valuable domestics, recorded with the simple truth of natural feeling. I have two before me at this moment; one copied from a tombstone of a churchyard in Warwickshire:

"Here lieth the body of Joseph Batte, confidential servant to George Birch, Esq. of Hampstead Hall. His grateful friend and master caused this inscription to be written in memory of his discretion, fidelity, diligence, and continence. He died (a bachelor) aged 84, having lived 44 years in the same family."

The other was taken from a tombstone in Eltham churchyard:

"Here lie the remains of Mr. James Tappy, who departed this life on the 8th of September, 1818, aged 84, after a faithful service of 60 years in one family; by each individual of which he lived respected, and died lamented by the sole survivor."

Few monuments, even of the illustrious, have given me the glow about the heart that I felt while copying this

honest epitaph in the churchyard of Eltham. I sympathized with this "sole survivor" of a family, mourning over the grave of the faithful follower of his race, who had been, no doubt, a living memento of times and friends that had passed away; and in considering this record of long and devoted services, I called to mind the touching speech of Old Adam in "As You Like It," when tottering after the youthful son of his ancient master:

"Master, go on, and I will follow thee
To the last gasp, with love and loyalty !

NOTE.—I cannot but mention a tablet which I have seen somewhere in the chapel of Windsor Castle, put up by the late King to the memory of a family servant, who had been a faithful attendant of his lamented daughter, the Princess Amelia. George III. possessed much of the strong domestic feeling of the old English country gentleman; and it is an incident curious in monumental history, and creditable to the human heart,—a monarch erecting a monument in honour of the humble virtues of a menial.

THE WIDOW.

She was so charitable and pitious
She would weep if that she saw a mous
Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bled :
Of small hounds had she, that she fed
With rost flesh, milke, and wastel bread ;
But sore wept she if any of them were dead,
Or if man smote them with a yard smart.

CHAUCER.

NOTWITHSTANDING the whimsical parade made by Lady Lillycraft on her arrival, she has none of the petty stateliness that I had imagined; but on the contrary she has a degree of nature, and simple-heartedness, if I may use the phrase, that mingles well with her old-fashioned manners and harmless ostentation. She dresses in rich silks, with long waist; she rouges considerably, and her hair, which is nearly white, is frizzled out, and put up with pins. Her face is pitted with the small-pox, but the delicacy of her features shows that she may once have been beautiful; and she has a very fair and well-shaped hand and arm, of which, if I mistake not, the good lady is still a little vain.

I have had the curiosity to gather a few particulars concerning her. She was a great belle in town between thirty and forty years since, and reigned for two seasons with all the insolence of beauty, refusing several excellent offers; when, unfortunately, she was robbed of her charms and her lovers by an attack of the small-pox. She retired immediately into the country, where she some time after inherited an estate, and married a baronet, a former admirer, whose passion had suddenly revived; "having," as he said, "always loved her mind rather than her person."

The baronet did not enjoy her mind and fortune above six months, and had scarcely grown very tired of her, when he broke his neck in a fox-chase and left her free, rich, and disconsolate. She has remained on her estate in the country ever since, and has never shown any desire to return to town, and revisit the scene of her early triumphs and fatal malady. All her favourite recollections, however, revert to that short period of her youthful beauty. She has no idea of town but as it was at that time; and continually forgets that the place and people must have changed materially in the course of nearly half a century. She will often speak of the toasts of those days as if still reigning; and, until very recently, used to talk with delight of the royal family, and the beauty of the young princes and princesses. She cannot be brought to think of the present king otherwise than as an elegant young man, rather wild, but who danced a minuet divinely; and before he came to the crown, would often mention him as the "sweet young prince."

She talks also of the walks in Kensington Gardens, where the gentleman appeared in gold-laced coats and cocked hats, and the ladies in hoops, and swept so proudly along the grassy avenues; and she thinks the ladies let themselves sadly down in their dignity, when they gave up cushioned head-dresses, and high-heeled shoes. She has much to say too of the officers who were in the train of her admirers, and speaks familiarly of many wild young blades, that are now, perhaps, hobbling about watering places with crutches and gouty shoes.

Whether the taste the good lady had of matrimony discouraged her or not, I cannot say; but, though her merit and her riches have attracted many suitors, she has never been tempted to venture again into the happy state. This is

singular too, for she seems of a most soft and susceptible heart: is always talking of love and connubial felicity; and is a great stickler for old-fashioned gallantry, devoted attentions, and eternal constancy, on the part of the gentlemen. She lives, however, after her own taste. Her house, I am told, must have been built and furnished about the time of Sir Charles Grandison: everything about it is somewhat formal and stately; but has been softened down into a degree of voluptuousness, characteristic of an old lady very tender-hearted and romantic, and that loves her ease. The cushions of the great arm chairs, and wide sofas, almost bury you when you sit down on them. Flowers of the most rare and delicate kind are placed about the rooms and on little japanned stands; and sweet bags lie about the tables and mantle-pieces. The house is full of pet dogs, Angola cats, and singing birds, who are as carefully waited upon as she is herself.

She is dainty in her living, and a little of an epicure, living on white meats, and little lady-like dishes, though her servants have substantial old English fare, as their looks bear witness. Indeed, they are so indulged, that they are all spoiled, and when they lose their present place they will be fit for no other. Her ladyship is one of those easy-tempered beings that are always doomed to be much liked, but ill served, by their domestics, and cheated by all the world.

Much of her time is past in reading novels, of which she has a most extensive library, and has a constant supply from the publishers in town. Her erudition in this line of literature is immense: she has kept pace with the press for half a century. Her mind is stuffed with love-tales of all kinds, from the stately amours of the old books of chivalry, down to the last blue-covered romance, reeking from the press: though she evidently gives the preference to those that came out in the days of her youth, and when she was first in love. She maintains that there are no novels written now-a-days equal to Pamela and Sir Charles Grandison; and she places the Castle of Otranto at the head of all romances.

She does a vast deal of good in her neighbourhood, and is imposed upon by every beggar in the county. She is the benefactress of a village adjoining to her estate, and takes a special interest in all its love affairs. She knows of every courtship that is going on; every love-lorn damsel is sure to find a patient listener and sage adviser in her ladyship. She

takes great pains to reconcile all love quarrels, and should any faithless swain persist in his inconstancy, he is sure to draw on himself the good lady's violent indignation.

I have learned these particulars partly from Frank Bracbridge, and partly from Master Simon. I am now able to account for the assiduous attention of the latter to her ladyship. Her house is one of his favourite resorts, where he is a very important personage. He makes her a visit of business once a year, when he looks into all her affairs; which, as she is no manager, are apt to get into confusion. He examines the books of the overseer, and shoots about the estate, which, he says, is well stocked with game, notwithstanding that it is poached by all the vagabonds in the neighbourhood.

It is thought, as I before hinted, that the captain will inherit the greater part of her property, having always bene her chief favourite; for, in fact, she is partial to a red coat. She has now come to the Hall to be present at his nuptials, having a great disposition to interest herself in all matters of love and matrimony.

THE LOVERS.

Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away: for lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth. the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land.

SONG OF SOLOMON.

To a man who is a little of a philosopher, and a bachelor to boot; and who, by dint of some experience in the follies of life, begins to look with a learned eye upon the ways of man. and eke of woman; to such a man, I say, there is something very entertaining in noticing the conduct of a pair of young lovers. It may not be as grave and scientific a study as the loves of the plants, but it is certainly as interesting.

I have therefore derived much pleasure, since my arrival at the Hall, from observing the fair Julia and her lover. She has all the delightful blushing consciousness of an artless girl, inexperienced in coquetry, who has made her first conquest: while the captain regards her with that mixture of fondness and exultation, with which a youthful lover is apt to contemplate so beauteous a prize.

I observed them yesterday in the garden, advancing along one of the retired walks. The sun was shining with delicious warmth, making great masses of bright verdure, and deep blue shade. The cuckoo, that "harbinger of spring," was faintly heard from a distance; the thrush piped from the hawthorn, and the yellow butterflies sported, and toyed, and coquetted in the air.

The fair Julia was leaning on her lover's arm, listening to his conversation, with her eyes cast down, a soft blush on her cheek, and a quiet smile on her lips, while in the hand that hung negligently by her side was a bunch of flowers. In this way they were sauntering slowly along, and when I considered them, and the scene in which they were moving, I could not but think it a thousand pities that the season should ever change, or that young people should ever grow older, or that blossoms should give way to fruit, or that lovers should ever get married.

From what I have gathered of family anecdote, I understand that the fair Julia is the daughter of a favourite college friend of the squire; who, after leaving Oxford, had entered the army, and served for many years in India, where he was mortally wounded in a skirmish with the natives. In his last moments he had, with a faltering pen, recommended his wife and daughter to the kindness of his early friend.

The widow and her child returned to England helpless, and almost hopeless. When Mr. Bracebridge received accounts of their situation, he hastened to their relief. He reached them just in time to soothe the last moments of the mother, who was dying of a consumption, and to make her happy in the assurance that her child should never want a protector.

The good squire returned with his prattling charge to his stronghold, where he has brought her up with a tenderness truly paternal. As he has taken some pains to superintend her education, and form her taste, she has grown up with many of his notions, and considers him the wisest, as well as the best of men. Much of her time, too, has been passed with Lady Lillycraft, who has instructed her in the manners of the old school, and enriched her mind with all kinds of novels and romances. Indeed, her ladyship has had a great hand in promoting the match between Julia and the

captain, having had them together at her country seat the moment she found there was an attachment growing up between them; the good lady being never so happy as when she has a pair of turtles cooing about her.

I have been pleased to see the fondness with which the fair Julia is regarded by the old servants of the Hall. She has been a pet with them from childhood, and every one seems to lay some claim to her education; so that it is no wonder that she should be extremely accomplished. The gardener taught her to rear flowers, of which she is extremely fond. Old Christy, the pragmatistical huntsman, softens when she approaches; and as she sits lightly and gracefully in her saddle, claims the merit of having taught her to ride; while the housekeeper, who almost looks upon her as a daughter, intimates that she first gave her an insight into the mysteries of the toilet, having been dressing-maid in her young days to the late Mrs. Bracebridge. I am inclined to credit this last claim, as I have noticed that the dress of the young lady had an air of the old school, though managed with native taste, and that her hair was put up very much in the style of Sir Peter Lely's portraits in the picture gallery.

Her very musical attainments partake of this old-fashioned character, and most of her songs are such as are not at the present day to be found on the piano of a modern performer. I have, however, seen so much of modern fashions, modern accomplishments, and modern fine ladies, that I relish this tinge of antiquated style in so young and lovely a girl; and I have had as much pleasure in hearing her warble one of the old songs of Herrick, or Carew, or Suckling, adapted to some simple old melody, as I have had from listening to a lady amateur sky-lark it up and down through the finest bravura of Rossini or Mozart.

We have very pretty music in the evenings, occasionally, between her and the captain, assisted sometimes by Master Simon, who scrapes, dubiously, on his violin; being very apt to get out, and to halt a note or two in the rear. Sometimes he even thrums a little on the piano, and takes a part in a trio, in which his voice can generally be distinguished by a certain quavering tone, and an occasional false note.

I was praising the fair Julia's performance to him after one of her songs, when I found he took to himself the whole

credit of having formed her musical taste, assuring me that she was very apt; and, indeed, summing up her whole character in his knowing way, by adding, that "she was a very nice girl, and had no nonsense about her."

FAMILY RELIQUES.

My Infelice's face, her brow, her eye,
The dimple on her cheek: and such sweet skill
Hath from the cunning workman's pencil flown,
These lips look fresh and lively as her own.
False colours last after the true be dead.
Of all the roses grafted on her cheeks,
Of all the graces dancing in her eyes,
Of all the music set upon her tongue,
Of all that was past woman's excellence
In her white bosom; look, a painted board
Circumscribes all!

DEKKER.

AN old English family mansion is a fertile subject for study. It abounds with illustrations of former times, and traces of the tastes, and humours, and manners of successive generations. The alterations and additions, in different styles of architecture; the furniture, plate, pictures, hangings; the warlike and sporting implements of different ages and fancies; all furnish food for curious and amusing speculation. As the squire is very careful in collecting and preserving all family reliques, the Hall is full of remembrances of this kind. In looking about the establishment, I can picture to myself the characters and habits that have prevailed at different eras of the family history. I have mentioned on a former occasion the armour of the crusader which hangs up in the Hall. There are also several jack-boots, with enormously thick soles and high heels, that belonged to a set of cavaliers, who filled the Hall with the din and stir of arms during the time of the Covenanters. A number of enormous drinking vessel of antique fashion, with huge Venice glasses, and green hock glasses, with the apostles in relief on them, remain as monuments of a generation or two of hard-livers, that led a life of roaring revelry, and first introduced the gout into the family.

I shall pass over several more such indications of temporary tastes of the squire's predecessors; but I cannot forbear to

notice a pair of antlers in the great hall, which is one of the trophies of a hard-riding squire of former times, who was the Nimrod of these parts. There are many traditions of his wonderful feats in hunting still existing, which are related by old Christy, the huntsman, who gets exceedingly nettled if they are in the least doubted. Indeed, there is a frightful chasm, a few miles from the Hall, which goes by the name of the Squire's Leap, from his having cleared it in the ardour of the chase; there can be no doubt of the fact, for old Christy shows the very dints of the horse's hoofs on the rocks on each side of the chasm.

Master Simon holds the memory of this squire in great veneration, and has a number of extraordinary stories to tell concerning him, which he repeats at all hunting dinners; and I am told that they wax more and more marvellous the older they grow. He has also a pair of Ripon spurs which belonged to this mighty hunter of yore, and which he only wears on particular occasions.

The place, however, which abounds most with mementos of past times, is the picture gallery; and there is something strangely pleasing, though melancholy, in considering the long rows of portraits which compose the greater part of the collection. They furnish a kind of narrative of the lives of the family worthies, which I am enabled to read with the assistance of the venerable housekeeper, who is the family chronicler, prompted occasionally by Master Simon. There is the progress of a fine lady, for instance, through a variety of portraits. One represents her as a little girl, with a long waist and hoop, holding a kitten in her arms, and ogling the spectator out of the corners of her eyes, as if she could not turn her head. In another we find her in the freshness of youthful beauty, when she was a celebrated belle, and so hard-hearted as to cause several unfortunate gentlemen to run desperate and write bad poetry. In another she is depicted as a stately dame, in the maturity of her charms; next to the portrait of her husband, a gallant colonel in full-bottomed wig and gold-laced hat, who was killed abroad; and, finally, her monument is in the church, the spire of which may be seen from the window, where her effigy is carved in marble, and represents her as a venerable dame of seventy-six.

In like manner I have followed some of the family great men, through a series of pictures, from early boyhood to the

robe of dignity, or truncheon of command, and so on by degrees, until they were garnered up in the common repository, the neighbouring church.

There is one group that particularly interested me. It consisted of four sisters of nearly the same age, who flourished about a century since, and, if I may judge from their portraits, were extremely beautiful. I can imagine what a scene of gaiety and romance this old mansion must have been, when they were in the hey-day of their charms; when they passed like beautiful visions through its halls, or stepped daintily to music in the revels and dances of the cedar gallery; or printed, with delicate feet, the velvet verdure of these lawns. How must they have been looked up to with mingled love, and pride, and reverence, by the old family servants; and followed by almost painful admiration by the aching eyes of rival admirers! How must melody, and song, and tender serenade, have breathed about these courts, and their echoes whispered to the loitering tread of lovers! How must these very turrets have made the hearts of the young galliards thrill as they first discerned them from afar, rising from among the trees, and pictured to themselves the beauties casketed like gems within these walls! Indeed I have discovered about the place several faint records of this reign of love and romance, when the Hall was a kind of Court of Beauty. Several of the old romances in the library have marginal notes expressing sympathy and approbation, where there are long speeches extolling ladies' charms, or protesting eternal fidelity, or bewailing the cruelty of some tyrannical fair one. The interviews, and declarations, and parting scenes of tender lovers, also bear the marks of having been frequently read, and are scored, and marked with notes of admiration, and have initials written on the margins; most of which annotations have the day of the month and year annexed to them. Several of the windows, too, have scraps of poetry engraved on them with diamonds, taken from the writings of the fair Mrs. Phillips, the once celebrated Orinda. Some of these seem to have been inscribed by lovers: and others, in a delicate and unsteady hand, and a little inaccurate in the spelling, have evidently been written by the young ladies themselves, or by female friends, who had been on visits to the Hall. Mrs. Phillips seems to have been their favourite author, and they have distributed the names of her

heroes and heroines among their circle of intimacy. Some-times, in a male hand, the verse bewails the cruelty of beauty and the sufferings of constant love; while in a female hand it prudishly confines itself to lamenting the parting of female friends. The bow-window of my bed-room, which has, doubtless, been inhabited by one of these beauties, has several of these inscriptions. I have one at this moment before my eyes, called "Camilla parting with Leonora:"

"How perished is the joy that's past,
The present how unsteady!
What comfort can be great, and last,
When this is gone already!"

And close by it is another, written, perhaps, by some adventurous lover, who had stolen into the lady's chamber during her absence.

"THEODOSIUS TO CAMILLA.
I'd rather in your favour live,
Than in a lasting name;
And much a greater rate would give
For happiness than fame.

THEODOSIUS. 1700."

When I look at these faint records of gallantry and tenderness; when I contemplate the fading portraits of these beautiful girls, and think, too, that they have long since bloomed, reigned, grown old, died, and passed away, and with them all their graces, their triumphs, their rivalries, their admirers; the whole empire of love and pleasure in which they ruled—"all dead, all buried, all forgotten," I find a cloud of melancholy stealing over the present gaieties around me. I was gazing, in a musing mood, this very morning, at the portrait of the lady whose husband was killed abroad, when the fair Julia entered the gallery, leaning on the arm of the captain. The sun shone through the row of windows on her as she passed along, and she seemed to beam out each time into brightness, and relapse into shade, until the door at the bottom of the gallery closed after her. I felt a sadness of heart at the idea, that this was an emblem of her lot: a few more years of sunshine and shade, and all this life, and loveliness, and enjoyment, will have ceased, and nothing be left to commemorate this beautiful being but one more perishable portrait; to awaken, perhaps, the trite specu-

lations of some future loiterer, like myself, when I and my scribblings shall have lived through our brief existence, and been forgotten.

AN OLD SOLDIER.

I've worn some leather out abroad; let out a heathen soul or two; fed this good sword with the black blood of pagan Christians; converted a few individuals with it.—But let that pass.

THE ORDINARY.

THE Hall was thrown into some little agitation, a few days since, by the arrival of General Harbottle. He had been expected for several days, and had been looked for rather impatiently by several of the family. Master Simon assured me that I would like the general hugely, for he was a blade of the old school, and an excellent table companion. Lady Lillycraft, also, appeared to be somewhat fluttered, on the morning of the general's arrival, for he had been one of her early admirers; and she recollected him only as a dashing young ensign, just come upon the town. She actually spent an hour longer at her toilet, and made her appearance with her hair uncommonly frizzled and powdered, and an additional quantity of rouge. She was evidently a little surprised and shocked, therefore, at finding the little dashing ensign transformed into a corpulent old general, with a double chin, though it was a perfect picture to witness their salutations; the graciousness of her profound curtsy, and the air of the old school with which the general took off his hat, swayed it gently in his hand, and bowed his powdered head.

All this bustle and anticipation has caused me to study the general with a little more attention than, perhaps, I should otherwise have done; and the few days that he has already passed at the Hall have enabled me, I think, to furnish a tolerable likeness of him to the reader.

He is, as Master Simon observed, a soldier of the old school, with powdered head, side locks, and pigtail. His face is shaped like the stern of a Dutch man-of-war, narrow at top, and wide at bottom, with full rosy cheeks and a double chin; so that, to use the cant of the day, his organs of eating may be said to be powerfully developed.

The general, though a veteran, has seen very little active service, except the taking of Seringapatam, which forms an era in his history. He wears a large emerald in his bosom, and a diamond on his finger, which he got on that occasion, and whoever is unlucky enough to notice either, is sure to involve himself in the whole history of the siege. To judge from the general's conversation, the taking of Seringapatam is the most important affair that has occurred for the last century.

On the approach of warlike times on the continent, he was rapidly promoted to get him out of the way of younger officers of merit; until, having been hoisted to the rank of general, he was quietly laid on the shelf. Since that time his campaigns have been principally confined to watering-places; where he drinks the waters for a slight touch of the liver which he got in India; and plays whist with old dowagers, with whom he has flirted in his younger days. Indeed he talks of all the fine women of the last half century, and, according to hints which he now and then drops, has enjoyed the particular smiles of many of them.

He has seen considerable garrison duty, and can speak of almost every place famous for good quarters, and where the inhabitants give good dinners. He is a diner-out of the first-rate currency, when in town; being invited to one place because he has been seen at another. In the same way he is invited about the country seats, and can describe half the seats in the kingdom, from actual observation; nor is any one better versed in court gossip, and the pedigrees and inter-marriages of the nobility.

As the general is an old bachelor and an old beau, and there are several ladies at the Hall, especially his quondam flame Lady Jocelyne, he is put rather upon his gallantry. He commonly passes some time, therefore, at his toilet, and takes the field at a late hour every morning, with his hair dressed out and powdered, and a rose in his button-hole. After he has breakfasted, he walks up and down the terrace in the sunshine, humming an air, and hemming between every stave, carrying one hand behind his back, and with the other touching his cane to the ground, and then raising it up to his shoulder. Should he, in these morning promenades, meet any of the elder ladies of the family, as he frequently does Lady Lillycraft, his hat is immediately in his hand, and it is enough to remind one of those courtly groups of ladies and

gentlemen, in old prints of Windsor Terrace or Kensington Gardens.

He talks frequently about "the service," and is fond of humming the old song,

"Why, soldiers, why,
Should we be melancholy, boys?
Why, soldiers, why,
Whose business 'tis to die!"

I cannot discover, however, that the general has ever run any great risk of dying, excepting from an apoplexy, or indigestion. He criticises all the battles on the continent, and discusses the merits of the commanders, but never fails to bring the conversation, ultimately, to Tippoo Saib and Seringapatam. I am told that the general was a perfect champion at drawing-rooms, parades, and watering-places, during the late war, and was looked to with hope and confidence by many an old lady, when labouring under the terror of Buonaparte's invasion.

He is thoroughly loyal, and attends punctually on levees when in town. He has treasured up many remarkable sayings of the late king, particularly one which the king made to him on a field-day, complimenting him on the excellence of his horse. He extols the whole royal family, but especially the present king, whom he pronounces the most perfect gentleman and best whist-player in Europe. The general swears rather more than is the fashion of the present day; but it was the mode of the old school. He is, however, very strict in religious matters, and a staunch churchman. He repeats the responses very loudly in church, and is emphatical in praying for the king and royal family.

At table his loyalty waxes very fervent with his second bottle, and the song of "God save the King" puts him into a perfect ecstasy. He is amazingly well contented with the present state of things, and apt to get a little impatient at any talk about national ruin and agricultural distress. He says he has travelled about the country as much as any man, and has met with nothing but prosperity; and to confess the truth, a great part of his time is spent in visiting from one country-seat to another, and riding about the parks of his friends. "They talk of public distress," said the general this day to me, at dinner, as he smacked a glass of rich burgundy, and cast his eyes about the ample board; "they talk of public

distress, but where do we find it, sir? I see none. I see no reason any one has to complain. Take my word for it, sir, this talk about public distress is all humbug!"

THE WIDOW'S RETINUE.

Little dogs and all!

LEAR.

IN giving an account of the arrival of Lady Lillycraft at the Hall, I ought to have mentioned the entertainment which I derived from witnessing the unpacking of her carriage, and the disposing of her retinue. There is something extremely amusing to me in the number of factitious wants, the loads of imaginary conveniences, but real incumbrances, with which the luxurious are apt to burthen themselves. I like to watch the whimsical stir and display about one of these petty progresses. The number of robustious footmen and retainers of all kinds bustling about, with looks of infinite gravity and importance, to do almost nothing. The number of heavy trunks, and parcels, and bandboxes belonging to my lady; and the solicitude exhibited about some humble, odd-looking box by my lady's maid; the cushions piled in the carriage to make a soft seat still softer, and to prevent the dreaded possibility of a jolt; the smelling-bottles, the cordials, the baskets of biscuit and fruit; the new publications; all provided to guard against hunger, fatigue, or ennui; the led horses to vary the mode of travelling; and all this preparation and parade to move, perhaps, some very good-for-nothing personage about a little space of earth!

I do not mean to apply the latter part of these observations to Lady Lillycraft, for whose simple kindheartedness I have a very great respect, and who is really a most amiable and worthy being. I cannot refrain, however, from mentioning some of the motley retinue she has brought with her; and which, indeed, bespeak the overflowing kindness of her nature, which requires her to be surrounded with objects on which to lavish it.

In the first place, her ladyship has a pampered coachman, with a red face, and cheeks that hang down like dew-laps. He evidently domineers over her a little with respect to the fat horses; and only drives out when he thinks proper, and when he thinks it will be "good for the cattle."

She has a favourite page to attend upon her person : a handsome boy of about twelve years of age, but a mischievous varlet, very much spoiled, and in a fair way to be good for nothing. He is dressed in green, with a profusion of gold cord and gilt buttons about his clothes. She always has one or two attendants of the kind, who are replaced by others as soon as they grow to fourteen years of age. She has brought two dogs with her also, out of a number of pets which she maintains at home. One is a fat spaniel, called Zephyr—though heaven defend me from such a zephyr ! He is fed out of all shape and comfort ; his eyes are nearly strained out of his head ; he wheezes with corpulency, and cannot walk without great difficulty. The other is a little, old, gray-muzzled curmudgeon, with an unhappy eye, that kindles like a coal if you only look at him ; his nose turns up ; his mouth is drawn into wrinkles, so as to show his teeth ; in short, he has altogether the look of a dog far gone in misanthropy, and totally sick of the world. When he walks, he has his tail curled up so tight that it seems to lift his feet from the ground ; and he seldom makes use of more than three legs at a time, keeping the other drawn up as a reserve. This last wretch is called Beauty.

These dogs are full of elegant ailments unknown to vulgar dogs ; and are petted and nursed by Lady Lillycraft with the tenderest kindness. They are pampered and fed with delicacies by their fellow-minion, the page ; but their stomachs are often weak and out of order, so that they cannot eat ; though I have now and then seen the page give them a mischievous pinch, or thwack over the head, when his mistress was not by. They have cushions for their express use, on which they lie before the fire, and yet are apt to shiver and moan if there is the least draught of air. When any one enters the room, they make a most tyrannical barking, that is absolutely deafening. They are insolent to all the other dogs of the establishment. There is a noble stag-hound, a great favourite of the squire's, who is a privileged visitor to the parlour ; but the moment he makes his appearance, these intruders fly at him with furious rage ; and I have admired the sovereign indifference and contempt with which he seems to look down upon his puny assailants. When her ladyship drives out, these dogs are generally carried with her to take the air ; when they look out of each window of the carriage,

and bark at all vulgar pedestrian dogs. These dogs are a continual source of misery to the household: as they are always in the way, they every now and then get their toes trod on, and then there is a yelping on their part, and a loud lamentation on the part of their mistress, that fills the room with clamour and confusion.

Lastly, there is her ladyship's waiting-gentlewoman, Mrs. Hannah, a prim, pragmatical old maid; one of the most intolerable and intolerant virgins that ever lived. She has kept her virtue by her until it has turned sour, and now every word and look smacks of verjuice. She is the very opposite to her mistress, for one hates, and the other loves, all mankind. How they first came together I cannot imagine, but they have lived together for many years; and the abigail's temper being tart and encroaching, and her ladyship's easy and yielding, the former has got the complete upper hand, and tyrannizes over the good lady in secret.

Lady Lillycraft now and then complains of it, in great confidence, to her friends, but hushes up the subject immediately, if Mrs. Hannah makes her appearance. Indeed, she has been so accustomed to be attended by her, that she thinks she could not do without her; though one great study of her life is to keep Mrs. Hannah in good humour, by little presents and kindnesses.

Master Simon has a most devout abhorrence, mingled with awe, for this ancient spinster. He told me the other day, in a whisper, that she was a cursed brimstone—in fact, he added another epithet, which I would not repeat for the world. I have remarked, however, that he is always extremely civil to her when they meet.

READY-MONEY JACK.

My purse, it is my privy wyfe,
 This song I dare both syng and say,
 It keepeth men from grievous stryfe
 When every man for hymself shak pay.
 As I ryde in ryche array
 For gold and sylver men wyll me floryshe;
 By thys matter I dare well saye,
 Ever grammercy myne owne purse.

BOOK OF HUNTING.

ON the skirts of the neighbouring village there lives a kind of small potentate, who, for aught I know, is a representative of one of the most ancient legitimate lines of the present day; for the empire over which he reigns has belonged to his family time out of mind. His territories comprise a considerable number of good fat acres; and his seat of power is an old farm-house, where he enjoys, unmolested, the stout oaken chair of his ancestors. The personage to whom I allude is a sturdy old yeoman of the name of John Tibbets, or rather Ready-Money Jack Tibbets, as he is called throughout the neighbourhood.

The first place where he attracted my attention was in the churchyard on Sunday; where he sat on a tombstone after service, with his hat a little on one side, holding forth to a small circle of auditors, and, as I presumed, expounding the law and the prophets, until, on drawing a little nearer, I found he was only expatiating on the merits of a brown horse. He presented so faithful a picture of a substantial English yeoman, such as he is often described in books, heightened, indeed, by some little finery peculiar to himself, that I could not but take note of his whole appearance.

He was between fifty and sixty, of a strong muscular frame, and at least six feet high, with a physiognomy as grave as a lion's, and set off with short, curling, iron-gray locks. His shirt-collar was turned down, and displayed a neck covered with the same short, curling, gray hair; and he wore a coloured silk neckcloth, tied very loosely, and tucked in at the bosom, with a green paste brooch on the knot. His coat was of dark-green cloth, with silver buttons, on each of which was engraved a stag, with his own name, John Tibbets, underneath. He had an inner waistcoat of figured chintz, between which and his coat was another of scarlet cloth, unbuttoned. His breeches were also left unbuttoned at the knees, not from any slovenliness, but to show a broad pair of scarlet garters. His stockings were blue, with white clocks; he wore large silver shoe-buckles; a broad paste buckle in his hatband; his sleeve buttons were, gold seven-shilling pieces; and he had two or three guineas hanging as ornaments to his watch-chain.

On making some inquiries about him, I gathered that he was descended from a line of farmers that had always lived on the same spot, and owned the same property; and that half

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of the churchyard was taken up with the tombstones of his race. He has all his life been an important character in the place. When a youngster, he was one of the most roaring blades of the neighbourhood. No one could match him at wrestling, pitching the bar, cudgel play, and other athletic exercises. Like the renowned Pinner of Wakefield, he was the village champion; carried off the prize at all the fairs, and threw his gauntlet at the country round. Even to this day the old people talk of his prowess, and undervalue, in comparison, all heroes of the green that have succeeded him; nay, they say, that if Ready-Money Jack were to take the field even now, there is no one could stand before him.

When Jack's father died, the neighbours shook their heads, and predicted that young Hopeful would soon make way with the old homestead; but Jack falsified all their predictions. The moment he succeeded to the paternal farm he assumed a new character; took a wife; attended resolutely to his affairs, and became an industrious, thrifty farmer. With the family property he inherited a set of old family maxims, to which he steadily adhered. He saw to everything himself; put his own hand to the plough; worked hard; ate heartily; slept soundly; paid for everything in cash down; and never danced except he could do it to the music of his own money in both pockets. He has never been without a hundred or two pounds in gold by him, and never allows a debt to stand unpaid. This has gained him his current name, of which, by the by, he is a little proud; and has caused him to be looked upon as a very wealthy man by all the village.

Notwithstanding his thrift, however, he has never denied himself the amusements of life, but has taken a share in every passing pleasure. It is his maxim, that "he that works hard can afford to play." He is, therefore, an attendant at all the country fairs and wakes, and has signalized himself by feats of strength and prowess on every village green in the shire. He often makes his appearance at horse-races, and sports his half-guinea and even his guinea at a time; keeps a good horse for his own riding, and to this day is fond of following the hounds, and is generally in at the death. He keeps up the rustic revels, and hospitalities too, for which his paternal farm-house has always been noted; has plenty of good cheer

and dancing at harvest-home, and, above all, keeps the "merry night,"* as it is termed, at Christmas.

With all his love of amusement, however, Jack is by no means a boisterous jovial companion. He is seldom known to laugh even in the midst of his gaiety; but maintains the same grave, lion-like demeanour. He is very slow at comprehending a joke; and is apt to sit puzzling at it, with a perplexed look, while the rest of the company is in a roar. This gravity has, perhaps, grown on him with the growing weight of his character; for he is gradually rising into patriarchal dignity in his native place. Though he no longer takes an active part in athletic sports, yet he always presides at them, and is appealed to on all occasions as umpire. He maintains the peace on the village-green at holiday games, and quells all brawls and quarrels by collaring the parties and shaking them heartily, if refractory. No one ever pretends to raise a hand against him, or to contend against his decisions; the young men having grown up in habitual awe of his prowess, and in implicit deference to him as the champion and lord of the green.

He is a regular frequenter of the village inn, the landlady having been a sweetheart of his in early life, and he having always continued on kind terms with her. He seldom, however drinks anything but a draught of ale; smokes his pipe, and pays his reckoning before leaving the tap-room. Here he "gives his little senate laws;" decides bets, which are very generally referred to him; determines upon the characters and qualities of horses; and indeed plays now and then the part of a judge, in settling petty disputes between neighbours, which otherwise might have been nursed by country attorneys into tolerable law-suits. Jack is very candid and impartial in his decisions, but he has not a head to carry a long argument, and is very apt to get perplexed and out of patience if there is much pleading. He generally breaks through the argument with a strong voice, and brings matters to a summary conclusion, by pronouncing what he calls the

* MERRY NIGHT; a rustic merry-making in a farm-house about Christmas, common in some parts of Yorkshire. There is abundance of homely fare, tea, cakes, fruit, and ale; various feats of agility, amusing games, romping, dancing, and kissing withal. They commonly break up at midnight.

"upshot of the business," or, in other words, "the long and short of the matter."

Jack once made a journey to London, a great many years since, which has furnished him with topics of conversation ever since. He saw the old king on the terrace at Windsor, who stopped, and pointed him out to one of the princesses, being probably struck with Jack's truly yeoman-like appearance. This is a favourite anecdote with him, and has no doubt had a great effect in making him a most loyal subject ever since, in spite of taxes and poor's rates. He was also at Bartholomew-fair, where he had half the buttons cut off his coat; and a gang of pickpockets, attracted by his external show of gold and silver, made a regular attempt to hustle him as he was gazing at a show; but for once they found that they had caught a tartar, for Jack enacted as great wonders among the gang as Samson did among the Philistines. One of his neighbours, who had accompanied him to town, and was with him at the fair, brought back an account of his exploits, which raised the pride of the whole village; who considered their champion as having subdued all London, and eclipsed the achievements of Friar Tuck, or even the renowned Robin Hood himself.

Of late years the old fellow has begun to take the world easily; he works less, and indulges in greater leisure, his son having grown up, and succeeded to him both in the labours of the farm and the exploits of the green. Like all sons of distinguished men, however, his father's renown is a disadvantage to him, for he can never come up to public expectation. Though a fine, active fellow of three-and-twenty, and quite the "cock of the walk," yet the old people declare he is nothing like what Ready-Money Jack was at his time of life. The youngster himself acknowledges his inferiority, and has a wonderful opinion of the old man, who indeed taught him all his athletic accomplishments, and holds such a sway over him, that I am told, even to this day, he would have no hesitation to take him in hands, if he rebelled against paternal government.

The squire holds Jack in very high esteem, and shows him to all his visitors as a specimen of old English "heart of oak." He frequently calls at his house, and tastes some of his home-brewed, which is excellent. He made Jack a present of old Tusser's "Hundred Points of good Husbandrie."

which has furnished him with reading ever since, and is his text-book and manual in all agricultural and domestic concerns. He has made dog's ears at the most favourite passages, and knows many of the poetical maxims by heart.

Tibbets, though not a man to be daunted or fluttered by high acquaintances; and though he cherishes a sturdy independence of mind and manner, yet is evidently gratified by the attentions of the squire, whom he has known from boyhood, and pronounces "a true gentleman every inch of him." He is also on excellent terms with Master Simon, who is a kind of privy councillor to the family; but his great favourite is the Oxonian, whom he taught to wrestle and play at quarter-staff when a boy, and considers the most promising young gentleman in the whole county.

BACHELORS.

The Bachelor most joyfully
In pleasant plight doth pass his days,
Good fellowship and companie
He doth maintain and kepe alwaies.

EVANS' OLD BALLADS.

THERE is no character in the comedy of human life that is more difficult to play well than that of an old bachelor. When a single gentleman, therefore, arrives at that critical period when he begins to consider it an impertinent question to be asked his age, I would advise him to look well to his ways. This period, it is true, is much later with some men than with others; I have witnessed more than once the meeting of two wrinkled old lads of this kind, who had not seen each other for several years, and have been amused by the amicable exchange of compliments on each other's appearance that takes place on such occasions. There is always one invariable observation, "Why, bless my soul! you look younger than when last I saw you!" Whenever a man's friends begin to compliment him about looking young, he may be sure that they think he is growing old.

I am led to make these remarks by the conduct of Master Simon and the general, who have become great cronies. As the former is the youngest by many years, he is regarded as

quite a youthful gallant by the general, who moreover looks upon him as a man of great wit and prodigious acquirements. I have already hinted that Master Simon is a family beau, and considered rather a young fellow by all the elderly ladies of the connexion; for an old bachelor, in an old family connexion, is something like an actor in a regular dramatic corps, who seems "to flourish in immortal youth," and will continue to play the Romeos and Rangers for half a century together.

Master Simon, too, is a little of the camelion, and takes a different hue with every different companion: he is very attentive and officious, and somewhat sentimental, with Lady Lillycraft; copies out little namby-pamby ditties and love-songs for her, and draws quivers, and doves, and darts, and Cupids, to be worked in the corners of her pocket handkerchiefs. He indulges, however, in very considerable latitude with the other married ladies of the family; and has many sly pleasantries to whisper to them, that provoke an equivocal laugh and tap of the fan. But when he gets among young company, such as Frank Bracebridge, the Oxonian, and the general, he is apt to put on the mad wig, and to talk in a very bachelor-like strain about the sex.

In this he has been encouraged by the example of the general, whom he looks up to as a man who has seen the world. The general, in fact, tells shocking stories after dinner, when the ladies have retired, which he gives as some of the choice things that are served up at the Mulligatawney club, a knot of boon companions in London. He also repeats the fat jokes of old Major Pendergast, the wit of the club, and which, though the general can hardly repeat them for laughing, always make Mr. Bracebridge look grave, he having a great antipathy to an indecent jest. In a word, the general is a complete instance of the declension in gay life, by which a young man of pleasure is apt to cool down into an obscure old gentleman.

I saw him and Master Simon, an evening or two since, conversing with a buxom milkmaid in a meadow; and from their elbowing each other now and then, and the general's shaking his shoulders, blowing up his cheeks, and breaking out into a short fit of irrepressible laughter, I had no doubt they were playing the mischief with the girl.

As I looked at them through a hedge, I could not but think

they would have made a tolerable group for a modern picture of Susannah and the two elders. It is true the girl seemed in no wise alarmed at the force of the enemy; and I question, had either of them been alone, whether she would not have been more than they would have ventured to encounter. Such veteran roysters are daring wags when together, and will put any female to the blush with their jokes; but they are as quiet as lambs when they fall singly into the clutches of a fine woman.

In spite of the general's years, he evidently is a little vain of his person, and ambitious of conquests. I have observed him on Sunday in church, eyeing the country girls most suspiciously; and have seen him leer upon them with a down-right amorous look, even when he has been gallanting Lady Lillycraft with great ceremony through the churchyard. The general, in fact, is a veteran in the service of Cupid rather than of Mars, having signalized himself in all the garrison towns and country quarters, and seen service in every ball-room of England. Not a celebrated beauty but he has laid siege to; and if his words may be taken in a matter wherein no man is apt to be over veracious, it is incredible what success he has had with the fair. At present he is like a worn-out warrior, retired from service; but who still cocks his beaver with a military air, and talks stoutly of fighting whenever he comes within the smell of gunpowder.

I have heard him speak his mind very freely over his bottle, about the folly of the captain in taking a wife; as he thinks a young soldier should care for nothing but his "bottle and kind landlady." But, in fact, he says, the service on the continent has had a sad effect upon the young men; they have been ruined by light wines and French quadrilles. "They've nothing," he says, "of the spirit of the old service. There are none of your six-bottle men left, that were the souls of a mess-dinner, and used to play the very deuce among the women."

As to a bachelor, the general affirms that he is a free and easy man, with no baggage to take care of but his portman-teau; but, as Major Pendergast says, a married man, with his wife hanging on his arm, always puts him in mind of a chamber candlestick, with its extinguisher hitched to it. I should not mind all this if it were merely confined to the general; but I fear he will be the ruin of my friend, Master

Simon, who already begins to echo his heresies, and to talk in the style of a gentleman that has seen life, and lived upon the town. Indeed, the general seems to have taken Master Simon in hand, and talks of showing him the lions when he comes to town, and of introducing him to a knot of choice spirits at the Mulligatawney club; which, I understand, is composed of old nabobs, officers in the Company's employ, and other "men of Ind," that have seen service in the East, and returned home burnt out with curry and touched with the liver complaint. They have their regular club, where they eat Mulligatawney soup, smoke the hookah, talk about Tippoo Saib, Seringapatam, and tiger-hunting; and are tediously agreeable in each other's company.

WIVES.

Believe me, man, there is no greater blisse
Than is the quiet joy of loving wife;
Which whoso wants, halfe of himselfe doth misse;
Friend without change, playfellow without strife,
Food without fulness, counsaile without pride,
Is this sweet doubling of our single life.

SIR P. SIDNEY.

THERE IS so much talk about matrimony going on round me, in consequence of the approaching event for which we are assembled at the Hall, that I confess I find my thoughts singularly exercised on the subject. Indeed, all the bachelors of the establishment seem to be passing through a kind of fiery ordeal: for Lady Lillycraft is one of those tender, romance-read dames of the old school, whose mind is filled with flames and darts, and who breathe nothing but constancy and wedlock. She is for ever immersed in the concerns of the heart; and, to use a poetical phrase, is perfectly surrounded by "the purple light of love." The very general seems to feel the influence of this sentimental atmosphere; to melt as he approaches her ladyship, and, for the time, to forget all his heresies about matrimony and the sex.

The good lady is generally surrounded by little documents of her prevalent taste; novels of a tender nature; richly-bound little books of poetry, that are filled with sonnets and love tales, and perfumed with rose leaves; and she has

always an album at hand, for which she claims the contributions of all her friends. On looking over this last repository the other day, I found a series of poetical extracts, in the squire's handwriting, which might have been intended as matrimonial hints to his ward. I was so much struck with several of them, that I took the liberty of copying them out. They are from the old play of Thomas Davenport, published in 1661, entitled "The City Night-cap," in which is drawn out and exemplified, in the part of Abstemia, the character of a patient and faithful wife, which, I think, might vie with that of the renowned Griselda.

I have often thought it a pity that plays and novels should always end at the wedding, and should not give us another act, and another volume, to let us know how the hero and heroine conducted themselves when married. Their main object seems to me merely to instruct young ladies how to get husbands, but not how to keep them: now this last, I speak it with all due diffidence, appears to me to be a desideratum in modern married life. It is appalling to those who have not yet adventured into the holy state, to see how soon the flame of romantic love burns out, or rather is quenched in matrimony; and how deplorably the passionate, poetic lover declines into the phlegmatic, prosaic husband. I am inclined to attribute this very much to the defect just mentioned in the plays and novels, which form so important a branch of study of our young ladies; and which teach them how to be heroines; but leave them totally at a loss when they come to be wives. The play from which the quotations before me were made, however, is an exception to this remark; and I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of adducing some of them for the benefit of the reader, and for the honour of an old writer, who has bravely attempted to awaken dramatic interest in favour of a woman, even after she was married!

The following is a commendation of Abstemia to her husband Lorenzo:

She's modest, but not sullen, and loves silence;
Not that she wants apt words (for when she speaks,
She inflames love with wonder), but because
She calls wise silence the soul's harmony.
She's truly chaste; yet such a foe to coyness,
The poorest call her courteous; and, which is excellent,
(Though fair and young) she shuns to expose herself

To the opinion of strange eyes. She either seldom
Or never walks abroad but in your company ;
And then with such sweet bashfulness, as if
She were venturing on crack'd ice, and takes delight
To step into the print your foot hath made.
And will follow you whole fields; so she will drive
Tediousness out of time with her sweet character.

Notwithstanding all this excellence, Abstemia has the misfortune to incur the unmerited jealousy of her husband. Instead, however, of resenting his harsh treatment with clamorous upbraidings, and with the stormy violence of high windy virtue, by which the sparks of anger are so often blown into a flame, she endures it with the meekness of conscious, but patient virtue; and makes the following beautiful appeal to a friend who has witnessed her long-suffering :

——— Hast thou not seen me
Bear all his injuries, as the ocean suffers
The angry bark to plough through her bosom,
And yet is presently so smooth, the eye
Cannot perceive where the wide wound was made ?

Lorenzo, being wrought on by false representations, at length repudiates her. To the last, however, she maintains her patient sweetness, and her love for him, in spite of his cruelty. She deplores his error, even more than his unkindness; and laments the delusion which has turned his very affection into a source of bitterness. There is a moving pathos in her parting address to Lorenzo after their divorce:

——— Farewell, Lorenzo,
Whom my soul doth love: if you e'er marry,
May you meet a good wife ; so good, that you
May not suspect her, nor may she be worthy
Of your suspicion : and if you hear hereafter
That I am dead, inquire but my last words,
And you shall know that to the last I lov'd you. ↑
And when you walk forth with your second choice,
Into the pleasant fields, and by chance talk of me,
Imagine that you see me, lean and pale,
Strewing your path with flowers.——↑
But may she never live to pay my debts : (weeps)
If but in thought she wrong you, may she die
In the conception of the injury.
Pray make me wealthy with one kiss : farewell, sir ;
Let it not grieve you when you shall remember

That I was innocent : nor this forget,
 Though innocence here suffer, sigh, and groan,
 She walks but thorow thorns to find a throne.

In a short time Lorenzo discovers his error, and the innocence of his injured wife. In the transports of his repentance, he calls to mind all her feminine excellence; her gentle, uncomplaining, womanly fortitude, under wrongs and sorrows :

— Oh, Abstemia !

How lovely thou lookest now ! now thou appearest
 Chaster than is the morning's modesty,
 That rises with a blush, over whose bosom
 The western wind creeps softly : now I remember
 How, when she sat at table, her obedient eye
 Would dwell on mine, as if it were not well,
 Unless it look'd where I look'd : oh how proud
 She was, when she could cross herself to please me !
 But where now is this fair soul ? Like a silver cloud
 She hath wept herself, I fear, into the dead sea,
 And will be found no more.

It is but doing right by the reader, if interested in the fate of Abstemia by the preceding extracts, to say, that she was restored to the arms and affections of her husband, rendered fonder than ever, by that disposition in every good heart, to atone for past injustice, by an overflowing measure of returning kindness :

Thou wealth worth more than kingdoms ! I am now
 Confirmed past all suspicion ; thou art far
 Sweeter in thy sincere truth than a sacrifice
 Deck'd up for death with garlands. The Indian winds
 That blow from off the coast, and cheer the sailor
 With the sweet savour of their spices, want
 The delight flows in thee.

I have been more affected and interested by this little dramatic picture than by many a popular love-tale ; though, as I said before, I do not think it likely either Abstemia or patient Grizzle stand much chance of being taken for a model. Still I like to see poetry now and then extending its views beyond the wedding day, and teaching a lady how to make herself attractive even after marriage. There is no great need of enforcing on an unmarried lady the necessity of being agreeable ; nor is there any great art requisite in a youthful beauty to enable her to please. Nature has multiplied attractions round her. Youth is in itself attractive. The fresh-

ness of budding beauty needs no foreign aid to set it off; it pleases merely because it is fresh, and budding, and beautiful. But it is for the married state that a woman needs the most instruction, and in which she should be most on her guard to maintain her powers of pleasing. No woman can expect to be to her husband all that he fancied her when he was a lover. Men are always doomed to be duped, not so much by the arts of the sex, as by their own imaginations. They are always wooing goddesses, and marrying mere mortals. A woman should therefore ascertain what was the charm that rendered her so fascinating when a girl, and endeavour to keep it up when she has become a wife. One great thing undoubtedly was the chariness of herself and her conduct, which an unmarried female always observes. She should maintain the same niceness and reserve in her person and habits, and endeavour still to preserve a freshness and virgin delicacy in the eye of her husband. She should remember that the province of the woman is to be wooed, not to woo; to be caressed, not to caress. Man is an ungrateful being in love; bounty loses instead of winning him. The secret of a woman's power does not consist so much in giving as in withholding. A woman may give up too much even to her husband. It is to a thousand little delicacies of conduct that she must trust to keep alive passion, and to protect herself from that dangerous familiarity, that thorough acquaintance with every weakness and imperfection incident to matrimony. By these means she may still maintain her power, though she has surrendered her person, and may continue the romance of love even beyond the honeymoon.

"She that hath a wise husband," says Jeremy Taylor, "must entice him to an eternal dearness by the veil of modesty and the grave robes of chastity, the ornament of meekness, and the jewels of faith and charity. She must have no painting but blushings; her brightness must be purity, and she must shine round about with sweetnesses and friendship; and she shall be pleasant while she lives, and desired when she dies."

I have wandered into a rambling series of remarks on a trite subject, and a dangerous one for a bachelor to meddle with. That I may not, however, appear to confine my observations entirely to the wife, I will conclude with another quotation from Jeremy Taylor, in which the duties of both

parties are mentioned; while I would recommend his sermon on the marriage ring to all those who, wiser than myself, are about entering the happy state of wedlock.

"There is scarce any matter of duty but it concerns them both alike, and is only distinguished by names, and hath its variety by circumstances and little accidents; and what in one is called love, in the other is called reverence; and what in the wife is obedience, the same in the man is duty. He provides, and she dispenses; he gives commandments, and she rules by them; he rules her by authority, and she rules him by love; she ought by all means to please him, and he must by no means displease her."

STORY-TELLING.

A FAVOURITE evening pastime at the Hall, and one which the worthy squire is fond of promoting, is story-telling, "a good old-fashioned fireside amusement," as he terms it. Indeed, I believe, he promotes it chiefly, because it was one of the choice recreations in those days of yore, when ladies and gentlemen were not much in the habit of reading. Be this as it may, he will often, at supper table, when conversation flags, call on some one or other of the company for a story, as it was formerly the custom to call for a song; and it is edifying to see the exemplary patience, and even satisfaction, with which the good old gentleman would sit and listen to some hackneyed tale that he has heard for at least a hundred times.

In this way one evening the current of anecdotes and stories ran upon mystical personages that have figured at different times, and filled the world with doubt and conjecture; such as the Wandering Jew; the Man with the Iron Mask, who tormented the curiosity of all Europe; the Invisible Girl; and last, though not least, the Pig-faced Lady.

At length one of the company was called upon that had the most unpromising physiognomy for a story-teller that ever I had seen. He was a thin, pale, weazen-faced man, extremely nervous, that had sat at one corner of the table, shrunk up, as it were, into himself, and almost swallowed up in the cape of his coat, as a turtle in his shell.

The very demand seemed to throw him into a nervous agita-

tion, yet he did not refuse. He emerged his head out of his shell, made a few odd grimaces and gesticulations, before he could get his muscles into order, or his voice under command, and then offered to give some account of a mysterious personage that he had recently encountered in the course of his travels, and one whom he thought fully entitled of being classed with the Man with the Iron Mask.

I was so much struck with this extraordinary narrative, that I have written it out to the best of my recollection, for the amusement of the reader. I think it has in it all the elements of that mysterious and romantic narrative, so greedily sought after at the present day.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

A STAGE-COACH ROMANCE.

I'll cross it, though it blast me ! HAMLET.

It was a rainy Sunday, in the gloomy month of November. I had been detained, in the course of a journey, by a slight indisposition, from which I was recovering : but I was still feverish, and was obliged to keep within doors all day, in an inn of the small town of Derby. A wet Sunday in a country inn ! whoever has had the luck to experience one can only judge of my situation. The rain pattered against the casements ; the bells tolled for church with melancholy sound. I went to the windows in quest of something to amuse the eye ; but it seemed as if I had been placed completely out of the reach of all amusement. The windows of my bed-room looked out among tiled roofs and stacks of chimneys, while those of my sitting-room commanded a full view of the stable-yard. I know of nothing more calculated to make a man sick of this world than a stable-yard on a rainy day. The place was littered with wet straw that had been kicked about by travellers and stable-boys. In one corner was a stagnant pool of water surrounding an island of muck ; there were several half-drowned fowls crowded together under a cart, among which was a miserable crest-fallen cock, drenched out of all life and spirit : his drooping tail matted, as it were, into a single feather, along which the water trickled from his back ; near the cart was a half-dozing cow, chewing the cud,

and standing patiently to be rained on, with wreaths of vapour rising from her reeking hide; a wall-eyed horse, tired of the loneliness of the stable, was poking his spectral head out of a window, with the rain dripping on it from the eaves; an unhappy cur, chained to a dog-house hard by, uttered every now and then, between a bark and a yelp; a drab of a kitchen wench tramped backwards and forwards through the yard in pattens, looking as sulky as the weather itself; every thing, in short, was comfortless and forlorn, excepting a crew of hard-drinking ducks, assembled like boon companions round a puddle, making a riotous noise over their liquor.

I was lonely and listless, and wanted amusement. My room soon became insupportable. I abandoned it, and sought what is technically called the travellers' room. This is a public room set apart at most inns for the accommodation of a class of wayfarers, called travellers, or riders; a kind of commercial knights-errant, who are incessantly scouring the kingdom in gigs, on horseback, or by coach. They are the only successors that I know of, at the present day, to the knights-errant of yore. They lead the same kind of roving adventurous life, only changing the lance for a driving-whip, the buckler for a pattern-card, and the coat of mail for an upper Benjamin. Instead of vindicating the charms of peerless beauty, they rove about, spreading the fame and standing of some substantial tradesman or manufacturer, and are ready at any time to bargain in his name: it being the fashion now-a-days to trade, instead of fight, with one another. As the room of the hostel, in the good old fighting times, would be hung round at night with the armour of way-worn warriors, such as coats of mail, falchions, and yawning helmets; so the travellers' room is garnished with the harnessing of their successors, with box-coats, whips of all kinds, spurs, gaiters, and oil-cloth covered hats.

I was in hopes of finding some of these worthies to talk with, but was disappointed. There were, indeed, two or three in the room; but I could make nothing of them. One was just finishing breakfast, quarrelling with his bread and butter, and huffing the waiter; another buttoned on a pair of gaiters, with many exccrations at Boots for not having cleaned his shoes well; a third sat drumming on the table with his fingers, and looking at the rain as it streamed down the

window-glass: they all appeared infected by the weather, and disappeared, one after the other, without exchanging a word.

I sauntered to the window and stood gazing at the people, picking their way to church, with petticoats hoisted midleg high, and dripping umbrellas. The bell ceased to toll, and the streets became silent. I then amused myself with watching the daughters of a tradesman opposite, who being confined to the house for fear of wetting their Sunday finery, played off their charms at the front windows, to fascinate the chance tenants of the inn. They at length were summoned away by a vigilant, vinegar-faced mother, and I had nothing further from without to amuse me.

What was I to do to pass away the long-lived day? I was sadly nervous and lonely; and everything about an inn seems calculated to make a dull day ten times duller. Old newspapers, smelling of beer and tobacco smoke, and which I had already read half a dozen times. Good-for-nothing books, that were worse than rainy weather. I bored myself to death with an old volume of the *Lady's Magazine*. I read all the common-place names of ambitious travellers scrawled on the panes of glass; the eternal families of the Smiths and the Browns, and the Jacksons, and the Johnsons, and all the other sons; and I decyphered several scraps of fatiguing inn-window poetry which I have met with in all parts of the world.

The day continued lowering and gloomy; the slovenly, ragged, spongy clouds drifted heavily along: there was no variety even in the rain; it was one dull, continued, monotonous patter, patter, patter, excepting that now and then I was enlivened by the idea of a brisk shower, from the rattling of the drops upon a passing umbrella.

It was quite *refreshing* (if I may be allowed a hackneyed phrase of the day), when, in the course of the morning, a horn blew, and a stage-coach whirled through the street, with outside passengers stuck all over it, cowering under cotton umbrellas, and scathed together, and reeking with the steams of wet box-coats and upper Benjamins.

The sound brought out from their lurking-places a crew of ragabond boys, and vagabond dogs, and the carrot-headed hostler, and that nondescript animal yeleft Boots, and all the other vagabond race that infest the purlieus of an inn; but

the bustle was transient; the coach again whirled on its way; and boy and dog, hostler and Boots, all slunk back again to their holes; the streets again became silent, and the rain continued to rain on. In fact, there was no hope of its clearing up, the barometer pointed to rainy weather; mine hostess's tortoise-shell cat sat by the fire washing her face, and rubbing her paws over her ears; and, on referring to the Almanack, I found a direful prediction stretching from the top of the page to the bottom through the whole month, "Expect—much—rain—about—this—time!"

I was dreadfully hipped. The hours seemed as if they would never creep by. The very ticking of the clock became irksome. At length the stillness of the house was interrupted by the ringing of a bell. Shortly after I heard the voice of a waiter at the bar, "The Stout Gentleman in No. 13, wants his breakfast. Tea and bread and butter, with ham and eggs; the eggs not to be too much done."

In such a situation as mine every incident is of importance. Here was a subject of speculation presented to my mind, and ample exercise for my imagination. I am prone to paint pictures to myself, and on this occasion I had some materials to work upon. Had the guest upstairs been mentioned as Mr. Smith, or Mr. Brown, or Mr. Jackson, or Mr. Johnson, or merely as "the gentleman in No. 13," it would have been a perfect blank to me. I should have thought nothing of it; but "The Stout Gentleman!"—the very name had something in it of the picturesque. It at once gave the size: it embodied the personage to my mind's eye, and my fancy did the rest.

He was stout, or, as some term it, lusty; in all probability, therefore, he was advanced in life, some people expanding as they grow old. By his breakfasting rather late, and in his own room, he must be a man accustomed to live at his ease, and above the necessity of early rising; no doubt a round, rosy, lusty old gentleman.

There was another violent ringing. The Stout Gentleman was impatient for his breakfast. He was evidently a man of importance; "well to do in the world;" accustomed to be promptly waited upon; of a keen appetite, and a little cross when hungry; "perhaps," thought I, "he may be some London alderman; or who knows but he may be a Member of Parliament?"

The breakfast was sent up, and there was a short interval of silence; he was, doubtless, making the tea. Presently there was a violent ringing; and before it could be answered, another ringing still more violent. "Bless me! what a choleric old gentleman!" The waiter came down in a huff. The butter was rancid, the eggs were overdone, the ham was too salt:—the Stout Gentleman was evidently nice in his eating; one of those who eat and growl, and keep the waiter on the trot, and live in a state militant with the household.

The hostess got into a fume. I should observe that she was a brisk coquettish woman; a little of a shrew, and something of a slammerkin, but very pretty withal: with a nin-compoop for a husband, as shrews are apt to have. She rated the servants roundly for their negligence in sending up so bad a breakfast, but said not a word against the Stout Gentleman; by which I clearly perceived that he must be a man of consequence, entitled to make a noise and to give trouble at a country inn. Other eggs, and ham, and bread and butter were sent up. They appeared to be more graciously received; at least there was no further complaint.

I had not made many turns about the travellers' room, when there was another ringing. Shortly afterwards there was a stir and an inquest about the house. The Stout Gentleman wanted the "Times" or the "Chronicle" newspaper. I set him down, therefore, for a whig; or, rather from his being so absolute and lordly where he had a chance, I suspected him of being a radical. Hunt, I had heard, was a large man; "who knows," thought I, "but it is Hunt himself?"

My curiosity began to be awakened. I inquired of the waiter who was this Stout Gentleman that was making all this stir, but I could get no information; nobody seemed to know his name. The landlords of bustling inns seldom trouble their heads about the names or occupations of their transient guests. The colour of a coat, the shape or size of the person, is enough to suggest a travelling name. It is either the tall gentleman, or the short gentleman, or the gentleman in black, or the gentleman in buff-colour; or, as in the present instance, the stout gentleman. A designation of the kind once hit on answers every purpose, and saves all further inquiry.

Rain—rain—rain! pitiless, ceaseless rain! No such thing

as putting a foot out of doors, and no occupation or amusement within. By and by I heard some one walking overhead. It was in the Stout Gentleman's room. He evidently was a large man by the heaviness of his tread; and an old man from his wearing such creaking soles. "He is doubtless," thought I, "some rich old square-toes of regular habits, and is now taking exercise after breakfast."

I now read all the advertisements of coaches and hotels that were stuck about the mantelpiece. The Lady's Magazine had become an abomination to me; it was as tedious as the day itself. I wandered out, not knowing what to do, and ascended again to my room. I had not been there long, when there was a squall from a neighbouring bed-room. A door opened and slammed violently; a chambermaid, that I had remarked for having a ruddy, good-humoured face, went down stairs in a violent flurry. The Stout Gentleman had been rude to her!

This sent a whole host of my deductions to the deuce in a moment. This unknown personage could not be an old gentleman: for old gentlemen are not apt to be so obstreperous to chambermaids. He could not be a young gentleman; for young gentlemen are not apt to inspire such indignation. He must be a middle-aged man, and confoundedly ugly into the bargain, or the girl would not have taken the matter in such terrible high dudgeon. I confess I was sorely puzzled.

In a few minutes I heard the voice of my landlady. I caught a glance of her as she came tramping up stairs; her face glowing, her cap flaring, her tongue wagging the whole way. "She'd have no such doings in her house, she'd warrant! If gentlemen did spend money freely, it was no rule. She'd have no servant-maids of hers treated in that way, when they were about their work; that's what she wouldn't!"

As I hate squabbles, particularly with women, and above all with pretty women, I slunk back into my room, and partly closed the door; but my curiosity was too much excited not to listen. The landlady marched intrepidly to the enemy's citadel, and entered it with a storm; the door closed after her. I heard her voice in high windy clamour for a moment or two. Then it gradually subsided, like a gust of wind in a garret; then there was a laugh: then I heard nothing more.

After a little while my landlady came out with an odd smile on her face, adjusting her cap, which was a little on one side. As she went down stairs, I heard the landlord ask her what was the matter; she said, "Nothing at all, only the girl's a fool."—I was more than ever perplexed what to make of this unaccountable personage, who could put a good-natured chambermaid in a passion, and send away a termagant landlady in smiles. He could not be so old, nor cross, nor ugly either.

I had to go to work at his picture again, and to paint him entirely different. I now set him down for one of those stout gentlemen that are frequently met with swaggering about the doors of country inns. Moist, merry fellows in Belcher handkerchiefs, whose bulk is a little assisted by malt liquors. Men who have seen the world, and been sworn at Highgate; who are used to tavern life; up to all the tricks of tapsters, and knowing in the ways of sinful publicans. Free-livers on a small scale; who are prodigal within the compass of a guinea: who call all the waiters by name, touzle the maids, gossip with the landlady at the bar, and prose over a pint of port, or a glass of negus after dinner.

The morning wore away in forming of these and similar surmises. As fast as I wove one system of belief, some movement of the unknown would completely overturn it, and throw all my thoughts again into confusion. Such are the solitary operations of a feverish mind. I was, as I have said, extremely nervous; and the continual meditation on the concerns of this invisible personage began to have its effect:—I was getting a fit of the fidgets.

Dinner-time came. I hoped the Stout Gentleman might dine in the travellers' room, and that I might at length get a view of his person; but no—he had dinner served in his own room. What could be the meaning of this solitude and mystery? He could not be a radical; there was something too aristocratical in thus keeping himself apart from the rest of the world, and condemning himself to his own dull company throughout a rainy day. And then, too, he lived too well for a discontented politician. He seemed to expatiate on a variety of dishes, and to sit over his wine like a jolly friend of good-living. Indeed, my doubts on this head were soon at an end; for he could not have finished his first bottle before I could faintly hear him humming a tune; and on

listening, I found it to be "God save the King." 'Twas plain, then, he was no radical, but a faithful subject; one that grew loyal over his bottle, and was ready to stand by king and constitution, when he could stand by nothing else. But who could he be! My conjectures began to run wild. Was he not some person of distinction travelling incog.? "God knows," said I, at my wits' end; "it may be one of the royal family, for aught I know, for they are all stout gentlemen!"

The weather continued rainy. The mysterious unknown kept his room, and, as far as I could judge, his chair, for I did not hear him move. In the mean time, as the day advanced, the travellers' room began to be frequented. Some, who had just arrived, came in buttoned up in box-coats; others came home who had been dispersed about the town. Some took their dinners, and some their tea. Had I been in a different mood, I should have found entertainment in studying this peculiar class of men. There were two especially, who were regular wags of the road, and versed in all the standing jokes of travellers. They had a thousand sly things to say to the waiting-maid, whom they called Louisa, and Ethelinda, and a dozen other fine names, changing the name every time, and chuckling amazingly at their own waggery. My mind, however, had become completely engrossed by the Stout Gentleman. He had kept my fancy in chase during a long day, and it was not now to be diverted from the scent.

The evening gradually wore away. The travellers read the papers two or three times over. Some drew round the fire and told long stories about their horses, about their adventures, their overturns, and breakings-down. They discussed the credits of different merchants and different inns; and the two wags told several choice anecdotes of pretty chambermaids and kind landladies. All this passed as they were quietly taking what they called their "night-caps," that is to say, strong glasses of brandy and water and sugar, or some other mixture of the kind; after which they one after another rang for "Boots" and the chambermaid, and walked off to bed in old shoes cut down into marvellously uncomfortable slippers.

There was only one man left; a short-legged, long-bodied, plethoric fellow, with a very large, sandy head. He sat by

himself, with a glass of port wine negus, and a spoon; sipping and stirring, and meditating and sipping, until nothing was left but the spoon. He gradually fell asleep bolt upright in his chair, with the empty glass standing before him; and the candle seemed to fall asleep too, for the wick grew long and black, and cabbaged at the end, and dimmed the little light that remained in the chamber. The gloom that now prevailed was contagious. Around hung the shapeless, and almost spectral, box-coats of departed travellers, long since buried in deep sleep. I only heard the ticking of the clock, with the deep-drawn breathings of the sleepy toper, and the drippings of the rain, drop, drop, drop, from the eaves of the house. The church bells chimed midnight. All at once the Stout Gentleman began to walk over head, pacing slowly backwards and forwards. There was something extremely awful in all this, especially to one in my state of nerves—these ghastly great coats, these guttural breathings, and the creaking footsteps of this mysterious being. His steps grew fainter and fainter, and at length died away. I could bear it no longer. I was wound up to the desperation of a hero of romance. "Be he who or what he may," said I to myself, "I'll have a sight of him!" I seized a chamber candle, and hurried up to No. 13. The door stood ajar. I hesitated—I entered; the room was deserted. There stood a large broad-bottomed elbow-chair at a table, on which was an empty tumbler and a "Times" newspaper, and the room smelt powerfully of Stilton cheese.

The mysterious stranger had evidently but just retired. I turned off, sorely disappointed, to my room, which had been changed to the front of the house. As I went along the corridor, I saw a large pair of boots, with dirty, waxed tops, standing at the door of a bed-chamber. They doubtless belonged to the unknown; but it would not do to disturb so redoubtable a personage in his den; he might discharge a pistol, or something worse, at my head. I went to bed, therefore, and lay awake half the night in a terribly nervous state; and even when I fell asleep, I was still haunted in my dreams by the idea of the Stout Gentleman and his wax-topped boots.

I slept rather late the next morning, and was awakened by some stir and bustle in the house, which I could not at first comprehend; until getting more awake, I found there

was a mail-coach starting from the door. Suddenly there was a cry from below, "The gentleman has forgot his umbrella! look for the gentleman's umbrella in No. 13!" I heard an immediate scampering of a chambermaid along the passage, and a shrill reply as she ran, "Here it is! here's the gentleman's umbrella!"

The mysterious stranger was then on the point of setting off. This was the only chance I should ever have of knowing him. I sprang out of bed, scrambled to the window, snatched aside the curtains, and just caught a glimpse of the rear of a person getting in at the coach-door. The skirts of a brown coat parted behind, and gave me a full view of the broad disk of a pair of drab breeches. The door closed—"All right!" was the word—the coach whirled off:—and that was all I ever saw of the Stout Gentleman!

FOREST TREES.

"A living gallery of aged trees."

ONE of the favourite themes of boasting with the squire is the noble trees on his estate, which, in truth, has some of the finest that I have seen in England. There is something august and solemn in the great avenues of stately oaks that gather their branches together high in air, and seem to reduce the pedestrians beneath them to mere pigmies. "An avenue of oaks or elms," the squire observes, "is the true colonnade that should lead to a gentleman's house. As to stone and marble, any one can rear them at once, they are the work of the day; but commend me to the colonnades that have grown old and great with the family, and tell by their grandeur how long the family has endured."

The squire has great reverence for certain venerable trees, gray with moss, which he considers as the ancient nobility of his domain. There is the ruin of an enormous oak, which has been so much battered by time and tempest, that scarce anything is left; though he says Christy recollects when, in his boyhood, it was healthy and flourishing, until it was struck by lightning. It is now a mere trunk, with one twisted bough stretching up into the air, leaving a green branch at the end of it. This sturdy wreck is much valued

by the squire; he calls it his standard-bearer, and compares it to a veteran warrior beaten down in battle, but bearing up his banner to the last. He has actually had a fence built round it, to protect it as much as possible from further injury.

It is with great difficulty that the squire can ever be brought to have any tree cut down on his estate. To some he looks with reverence, as having been planted by his ancestors; to others with a kind of paternal affection, as having been planted by himself; and he feels a degree of awe in bringing down with a few strokes of the axe what it has cost centuries to build up. I confess I cannot but sympathize, in some degree, with the good squire on the subject. Though brought up in a country overrun with forests, where trees are apt to be considered mere incumbrances, and to be laid low without hesitation or remorse, yet I could never see a fine tree hewn down without concern. The poets, who are naturally lovers of trees, as they are of everything that is beautiful, have artfully awakened great interest in their favour, by representing them as the habitations of sylvan deities; insomuch that every great tree had its tutelary genius, or a nymph, whose existence was limited to its duration. Evelyn, in his *Sylva*, makes several pleasing and fanciful allusions to this superstition. "As the fall," says he, "of a very aged oak, giving a crack like thunder, has often been heard at many miles distance; constrained though I often am to fell them with reluctance, I do not at any time remember to have heard the groans of those nymphs (grieving to be dispossessed of their ancient habitations) without some emotion and pity." And again, in alluding to a violent storm that had devastated the woodlands, he says, "Methinks I still hear, sure I am that I still feel, the dismal groans of our forests; the late dreadful hurricane having subverted so many thousands of goodly oaks, prostrating the trees, laying them in ghastly postures, like whole regiments fallen in battle by the sword of the conqueror, and crushing all that grew beneath them. The public accounts," he adds, "reckon no less than three thousand *brave oaks* in one part only of the forest of Dean blown down."

I have paused more than once in the wilderness of America, to contemplate the traces of some blast of wind, which seemed to have rushed down from the clouds and ripped its way

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through the bosom of the woodlands; rooting up, shivering and splintering the stoutest trees, and leaving a long track of desolation. There was something awful in the vast havoc made amongst these gigantic plants; and in considering their magnificent remains, so rudely torn and mangled, and hurled down to perish prematurely on their native soil, I was conscious of a strong movement of the sympathy so feelingly expressed by Evelyn. I recollect, also, hearing a traveller, of poetical temperament, expressing the kind of horror which he felt on beholding, on the banks of the Missouri, an oak of prodigious size, which had been, in a manner, overpowered by an enormous wild grape-vine. The vine had clasped its huge folds round the trunk, and from thence had wound about every branch and twig, until the mighty tree had withered in its embrace. It seemed like a Laocoon struggling ineffectually in the hideous coils of the monster Python. It was the lion of trees perishing in the embraces of a vegetable boa.

I am fond of listening to the conversation of English gentlemen on rural concerns, and of noticing with what taste and discrimination, and what strong, unaffected interest they will discuss topics which in other countries are abandoned to mere woodmen, or rustic cultivators. I have heard a noble earl descant on park and forest scenery with the science and feeling of a painter. He dwelt on the shape and beauty of particular trees on his estate, with as much pride and technical precision as though he had been discussing the merits of statues in his collection. I found that he had even gone considerable distances to examine trees which were celebrated among rural amateurs; for it seems that trees, like horses, have their established points of excellence; and that there are some in England which enjoy very extensive celebrity among tree-fanciers from being perfect in their kind.

There is something nobly simple and pure in such a taste: it argues, I think, a sweet and generous nature, to have this strong relish for the beauties of vegetation, and this friendship for the hardy and glorious sons of the forest. There is a grandeur of thought connected with this part of rural economy. It is, if I may be allowed the figure, the heroic line of husbandry. It is worthy of liberal, and free-born, and aspiring men. He who plants an oak looks forward for future ages, and plants for posterity. Nothing can be less selfish than

this. He cannot expect to sit in its shade, nor enjoy its shelter; but he exults in the idea that the acorn which he has buried in the earth shall grow up into a lofty pile, and shall keep on flourishing, and increasing, and benefiting mankind, long after he shall have ceased to tread his paternal fields. Indeed it is the nature of such occupations to lift the thoughts above mere worldliness. As the leaves of trees are said to absorb all noxious qualities of the air, and to breathe forth a purer atmosphere, so it seems to me as if they drew from us all sordid and angry passions, and breathed forth peace and philanthropy. There is a serene and settled majesty in woodland scenery, that enters into the soul, and dilates and elevates it, and fills it with noble inclinations. The ancient and hereditary groves, too, that embower this island, are most of them full of story. They are haunted by the recollections of great spirits of past ages, who have sought for relaxation among them from the tumult of arms; or the toils of state, or have wooed the muse beneath their shade. Who can walk, with soul unmoved, among the stately groves of Penshurst, where Sydney passed his boyhood; or can look without fondness upon the tree that is said to have been planted on his birth-day; or can ramble among the classic bowers of Hagley; or can pause among the solitudes of Windsor Forest, and look at the oaks around, huge, grey, and time-worn, like the old castle towers, and not feel as if he were surrounded by so many monuments of long-enduring glory? It is when viewed in this light, that planted groves, and stately avenues, and cultivated parks, have an advantage over the more luxuriant beauties of unassisted nature. It is that they teem with moral associations, and keep up the ever interesting story of human existence.

It is incumbent, then, on the high and generous spirits of an ancient nation, to cherish these sacred groves that surround their ancestral mansions, and to perpetuate them to their descendants. Republican as I am by birth, and brought up as I have been in republican principles and habits, I can feel nothing of the servile reverence for titled rank, merely because it is titled; but I trust that I am neither churl nor bigot in my creed. I can both see and feel how hereditary distinction, when it falls to the lot of a generous mind, may elevate that mind into true nobility. It is one of the effects of hereditary rank, when it falls thus happily, that it multiplies the duties,

and, as it were, extends the existence of the possessor. He does not feel himself a mere individual link in creation, responsible only for his own brief term of being. He carries back his existence in proud recollection, and he extends it forward in honourable anticipation. He lives with his ancestry, and he lives with his posterity. To both does he consider himself involved in deep responsibilities. As he has received much from those that have gone before, so he feels bound to transmit much to those who are to come after him. His domestic undertakings seem to imply a longer existence than those of ordinary men; none are so apt to build and plant for future centuries, as noble-spirited men, who have received their heritages from foregone ages.

I cannot but applaud, therefore, the fondness and pride with which I have noticed English gentlemen, of generous temperaments, and high aristocratic feelings, contemplating those magnificent trees, which rise, like towers and pyramids, from the midst of their paternal lands. There is an affinity between all great natures, animate and inanimate: the oak, in the pride and lustilhood of its growth, seems to me to take its range with the lion and the eagle, and to assimilate, in the grandeur of its attributes, to heroic and intellectual man. With its mighty pillar rising straight and direct towards heaven, bearing up its leafy honours from the impurities of earth, and supporting them aloft in free air and glorious sunshine, it is an emblem of what a true nobleman *should be*; a refuge for the weak, a shelter for the oppressed, a defence for the defenceless; warding off from them the pelting of the storm, or the scorching rays of arbitrary power. He who is *this*, is an ornament and a blessing to his native land. He who is *otherwise*, abuses his eminent advantages; abuses the grandeur and prosperity which he has drawn from the bosom of his country. Should tempests arise, and he be laid prostrate by the storm, who should mourn over his fall? Should he be borne down by the oppressive hand of power, who would murmur at his fate?—"why cumbereth he the ground?"

A LITERARY ANTIQUARY.

Printed bookes he contemnes, as a novelty of this latter age; but a manuscript he pores on everlastingly; especially if the cover be all moth-eaten, and the dust make a parenthesis between every syllable.

MICO-COSMOGRAPHIE, 1628.

THE squire receives great sympathy and support in his antiquated humours, from the parson, of whom I made some mention on my former visit to the Hall, and who acts as a kind of family chaplain. He has been cherished by the squire almost constantly since the time that they were fellow-students at Oxford; for it is one of the peculiar advantages of these great universities, that they often link the poor scholar to the rich patron, by early and heart-felt ties, that last through life, without the usual humiliations of dependence and patronage. Under the fostering protection of the squire, therefore, the little parson has pursued his studies in peace. Having lived almost entirely among books, and those, too, old books, he is quite ignorant of the world, and his mind is as antiquated as the garden at the Hall, where the flowers are all arranged in formal beds, and the yew-trees clipped into urns and peacocks.

His taste for literary antiquities was first imbibed in the Bodleian Library at Oxford; where, when a student, he passed many an hour foraging among the old manuscripts. He has since, at different times, visited most of the curious libraries in England, and has ransacked many of the cathedrals. With all his quaint and curious learning, he has nothing of arrogance or pedantry; but that unaffected earnestness and guileless simplicity which seem to belong to the literary antiquary.

He is a dark, mouldy little man, and rather dry in his manner: yet, on his favourite theme, he kindles up, and at times is even eloquent. No fox-hunter, recounting his last day's sport, could be more animated than I have seen the worthy parson, when relating his search after a curious document, which he had traced from library to library, until he fairly unearthed it in the dusty chapter-house of a cathedral. When, too, he describes some venerable manuscript, with its rich illuminations, its thick creamy vellum, its glossy ink, and the odour of the cloisters that seemed to exhale from it.

he rivals the enthusiasm of a Parisian epicure, expatiating on the merits of a Perigord pie, or a *Pâté de Strasbourg*.

His brain seems absolutely haunted with love-sick dreams about gorgeous old works in "silk linings, triple gold bands, and tinted leather, locked up in wire cases, and secured from the vulgar hands of the mere reader;" and, to continue the happy expression of an ingenious writer, "dazzling one's eyes, like eastern beauties peering through their jealousies."*

He has a great desire, however, to read such works in the old libraries and chapter-houses to which they belong; for he thinks a black-letter volume reads best in one of those venerable chambers where the light struggles through dusty lancet windows and painted glass; and that it loses half its zest if taken away from the neighbourhood of the quaintly carved oaken book-case and Gothic reading-desk. At his suggestion, the squire has had the library furnished in this antique taste, and several of the windows glazed with painted glass, that they may throw a properly tempered light upon the pages of their favourite old authors.

The parson, I am told, has been for some time meditating a commentary on Strutt, Brand, and Douce, in which he means to detect them in sundry dangerous errors in respect to popular games and superstitions; a work to which the squire looks forward with great interest. He is also a casual contributor to that long-established repository of national customs and antiquities, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and is one of those that every now and then make an inquiry concerning some obsolete customs or rare legend; nay, it is said that several of his communications have been at least six inches in length. He frequently receives parcels by coach from different parts of the kingdom, containing mouldy volumes and almost illegible manuscripts; for it is singular what an active correspondence is kept up among literary antiquaries, and how soon the fame of any rare volume, or unique copy, just discovered among the rubbish of a library, is circulated among them. The parson is more busy than common just now, being a little flurried by an advertisement of a work, said to be preparing for the press, on the mythology of the middle ages. The little man has long been gathering together all the hobgoblin tales he could collect, illustrative of the superstitions of former

* D'Israeli. *Curiosities of Literature*

times; and he is in a complete fever lest this formidable rival should take the field before him.

Shortly after my arrival at the Hall, I called at the parsonage, in company with Mr. Bracebridge and the general. The parson had not been seen for several days, which was a matter of some surprise, as he was an almost daily visitor at the Hall. We found him in his study, a small, dusky chamber, lighted by a lattice window that looked into the churchyard, and was overshadowed by a yew-tree. His chair was surrounded by folios and quartos, piled upon the floor, and his table was covered with books and manuscripts. The cause of his seclusion was a work which he had recently received, and with which he had retired in rapture from the world, and shut himself up to enjoy a literary honeymoon undisturbed. Never did boarding-school girl devour the pages of a sentimental novel, or Don Quixote a chivalrous romance, with more intense delight than did the little man banquet on the pages of this delicious work. It was Dibdin's *Bibliographical Tour*; a work calculated to have as intoxicating an effect on the imaginations of literary antiquaries, as the adventures of the heroes of the Round Table on all true knights; or the tales of the early American voyagers on the ardent spirits of the age, filling them with dreams of Mexican and Peruvian mines, and of the golden realm of El Dorado.

The good parson had looked forward to this *Bibliographical* expedition as of far greater importance than those to Africa, or the North Pole. With what eagerness had he seized upon the history of the enterprise! With what interest had he followed the redoubtable bibliographer and his graphical squire in their adventurous roamings among Norman castles and cathedrals, and French libraries, and German convents and universities; penetrating into the prison-houses of vellum manuscripts and exquisitely illuminated missals, and revealing their beauties to the world!

When the parson had finished a rapturous eulogy on this most curious and entertaining work, he drew forth from a little drawer a manuscript lately received from a correspondent, which perplexed him sadly. It was written in Norman-French in very ancient characters, and so faded and mouldered away as to be almost illegible. It was apparently an old Norman drinking song, that might have been

brought over by one of William the Conqueror's carousing followers. The writing was just legible enough to keep a keen antiquity hunter on a doubtful chase; here and there he would be completely thrown out, and then there would be a few words so plainly written as to put him on the scent again. In this way he had been led on for a whole day, until he had found himself completely at fault.

The squire endeavoured to assist him, but was equally baffled. The old general listened for some time to the discussion, and then asked the parson if he had read Captain Morris's, or George Stephens', or Anacreon Moore's bacchanalian songs; on the other replying in the negative, "Oh, then," said the general, with a sagacious nod, "if you want a drinking song, I can furnish you with the latest collection—I did not know you had a turn for those kind of things; and I can lend you the *Encyclopedia of Wit* into the bargain. I never travel without them; they're excellent reading at an inn."

It would not be easy to describe the odd look of surprise and perplexity of the parson at this proposal; or the difficulty the squire had in making the general comprehend, that though a jovial song of the present day was but a foolish sound in the ears of wisdom, and beneath the notice of a learned man, yet a trowl written by a tosspot several hundred years since was a matter worthy of the gravest research, and enough to set whole colleges by the ears.

I have since pondered much on this matter, and have figured to myself what may be the fate of our current literature, when retrieved piecemeal by future antiquaries, from among the rubbish of ages. What a Magnus Apollo, for instance, will Moore become among sober divines and dusty schoolmen! Even his festive and amatory songs, which are now the mere quickeners of our social moments, or the delights of our drawing-rooms, will then become matters of laborious research and painful collation. How many a grave professor will then waste his midnight oil, or worry his brain through a long morning, endeavouring to restore the pure text, or illustrate the biographical hints of "Come tell me, says Rosa, as kissing and kissed;" and how many an arid old book-worm, like the worthy little parson, will give up in despair, after vainly striving to fill up some fatal hiatus in "Fanny of Timmol!"

Nor is it merely such exquisite authors as Moore that are doomed to consume the oil of future antiquaries. Many a poor scribbler, who is now apparently sent to oblivion by pastry-cooks and cheesemongers, will then rise again in fragments, and flourish in learned immortality.

After all, thought I, time is not such an invariable destroyer as he is represented. If he pulls down, he likewise builds up; if he impoverishes one, he enriches another; his very dilapidations furnish matter for new works of controversy, and his rust is more precious than the most costly gilding. Under his plastic hand trifles rise into importance; the nonsense of one age becomes the wisdom of another; the levity of the wit gravitates into the learning of the pedant, and an ancient farthing moulders into infinitely more value than a modern guinea.

THE FARM-HOUSE.

——— Love and hay
Are thick sown, but come up full of thistles.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

I WAS so much pleased with the anecdotes which were told me of Ready-Money Jack Tibbets, that I got Master Simon, a day or two since, to take me to his house. It was an old-fashioned farm-house, built of brick, with curiously twisted chimneys. It stood at a little distance from the road, with a southern exposure, looking upon a soft green slope of meadow. There was a small garden in front, with a row of beehives humming among beds of sweet herbs and flowers. Well-scoured milking tubs, with bright copper hoops, hung on the garden paling. Fruit trees were trained up against the cottage, and pots of flowers stood in the windows. A fat superannuated mastiff lay in the sunshine at the door; with a sleek cat sleeping peacefully across him.

Mr. Tibbets was from home at the time of our calling, but we were received with hearty and homely welcome by his wife—a notable, motherly woman, and a complete pattern for wives, since, according to Master Simon's account, she never contradicts honest Jack, and yet manages to have her own way, and to control him in everything. She received us in

the main room of the house, a kind of parlour or hall, with great brown beams of timber across it, which Mr. Tibbets is apt to point out with some exultation, observing, that they don't put such timber in houses now-a-days. The furniture was old-fashioned, strong, and highly polished; the walls were hung with coloured prints of the story of the Prodigal Son, who was represented in a red coat and leather breeches. Over the fire-place was a blunderbuss, and a hard-favoured likeness of Ready-Money Jack, taken, when he was a young man, by the same artist that painted the tavern sign; his mother having taken a notion that the Tibbets had as much right to have a gallery of family portraits as the folks at the Hall.

The good dame pressed us very much to take some refreshment, and tempted us with a variety of household dainties, so that we were glad to compound by tasting some of her home-made wines. While we were there, the son and heir-apparent came home; a good-looking young fellow, and something of a rustic beau. He took us over the premises, and showed us the whole establishment. An air of homely but substantial plenty prevailed throughout; everything was of the best materials, and in the best condition. Nothing was out of place, or ill-made; and you saw everywhere the signs of a man that took care to have the worth of his money, and that paid as he went.

The farm-yard was well stocked; under a shed was a taxed cart, in trim order, in which Ready-Money Jack took his wife about the country. His well-fed horse neighed from the stable, and when led out into the yard, to use the words of young Jack, "he shone like a bottle;" for he said the old man made it a rule that everything about him should fare as well as he did himself.

I was pleased to see the pride which the young fellow seemed to have of his father. He gave us several particulars concerning his habits, which were pretty much to the effect of those I have already mentioned. He had never suffered an account to stand in his life, always providing the money before he purchased anything; and, if possible, paying in gold and silver. He had a great dislike to paper money, and seldom went without a considerable sum in gold about him. On my observing that it was a wonder he had never been waylaid and robbed, the young fellow smiled at the idea of

any one venturing upon such an exploit, for I believe he thinks the old man would be a match for Robin Hood and all his gang.

I have noticed that Master Simon seldom goes into any house without having a world of private talk with some one or other of the family, being a kind of universal counsellor and confidant. We had not been long at the farm, before the old dame got him into a corner of her parlour, where they had a long whispering conference together; in which I saw by his shrugs that there were some dubious matters discussed, and by his nods that he agreed with everything she said.

After we had come out, the young man accompanied us a little distance, and then, drawing Master Simon aside into a green lane, they walked and talked together for nearly half an hour. Master Simon, who has the usual propensity of confidants to blab everything to the next friend they meet with, let me know that there was a love affair in question; the young fellow having been smitten with the charms of Phœbe Wilkins, the pretty niece of the housekeeper at the Hall. Like most other love concerns it had brought its troubles and perplexities. Dame Tibbets had long been on intimate gossiping terms with the housekeeper, who often visited the farm-house; but when the neighbours spoke to her of the likelihood of a match between her son and Phœbe Wilkins, "Marry come up!" she scouted the very idea. The girl had acted as lady's maid, and it was beneath the blood of the Tibbets, who had lived on their own lands time out of mind, and owed reverence and thanks to nobody, to have the heir-apparent marry a servant!

These vapourings had faithfully been carried to the housekeeper's ear, by one of the mutual go-between friends. The old housekeeper's blood, if not as ancient, was as quick as that of Dame Tibbets.

She had been accustomed to carry a high head at the Hall and among the villagers; and her faded brocade rustled with indignation at the slight cast upon her alliance by the wife of a petty farmer. She maintained that her niece had been a companion rather than a waiting-maid to the young ladies. "Thank heavens, she was not obliged to work for her living, and was as idle as any young lady in the land; and when somebody died, would receive something that would be worth the notice of some folks with all their ready money."

A bitter feud had thus taken place between the two worthy dames, and the young people were forbidden to think of one another. As to young Jack, he was too much in love to reason upon the matter; and being a little heady, and not standing in much awe of his mother, was ready to sacrifice the whole dignity of the Tibbets to his passion. He had lately, however, had a violent quarrel with his mistress, in consequence of some coquetry on her part, and at present stood aloof. The politic mother was exerting all her ingenuity to widen this accidental breach; but, as is most commonly the case, the more she meddled with this perverse inclination of her son, the stronger it grew. In the meantime Old Ready-Money was kept completely in the dark; both parties were in awe and uncertainty as to what might be his way of taking the matter, and dreaded to awaken the sleeping lion. Between father and son, therefore, the worthy Mrs. Tibbets was full of business and at her wits' end. It is true that there was no great danger of honest Ready-Money's finding the thing out, if left to himself; for he was of a most unsuspicious temper, and by no means quick of apprehension; but there was daily risk of his attention being aroused by those cobwebs which his indefatigable wife was continually spinning about his nose.

Such is the distracted state of politics in the domestic empire of Ready Money Jack; which only shows the intrigues and internal dangers to which the best regulated governments are liable. In this perplexing situation of their affairs, both mother and son have applied to Master Simon for counsel; and, with all his experience in meddling with other people's concerns, he finds it an exceedingly difficult part to play, to agree with both parties, seeing that their opinions and wishes are so diametrically opposite.

HORSEMANSHIP.

A coach was a strange monster in those days, and the sight of one put both horse and man into amazement. Some said it was a great crabshell brought out of China, and some imagined it to be one of the Pagan temples in which the Cannibals adored the divell.

TAYLOR, THE WATER POET.

I HAVE made casual mention, more than once, of one of the squire's antiquated retainers, old Christy the huntsman. I

find that his crabbed humour is a source of much entertainment among the young men of the family: the Oxonian, particularly, takes a mischievous pleasure now and then in slyly rubbing the old man against the grain, and then smoothing him down again; for the old fellow is as ready to bristle up his back as a porcupine. He rides a venerable hunter called Pepper, which is a counterpart of himself, a heady, cross-grained animal, that frets the flesh off its bones; bites, kicks, and plays all manner of villanous tricks. He is as tough, and nearly as old as his rider, who has ridden him time out of mind, and is, indeed, the only one that can do anything with him. Sometimes, however, they have a complete quarrel, and a dispute for mastery, and then, I am told, it is as good as a farce to see the heat they both get into, and the wrongheaded contest that ensues; for they are quite knowing in each other's ways and in the art of teasing and fretting each other. Notwithstanding these doughty brawls, however, there is nothing that nettles old Christy sooner than to question the merits of his horse; which he upholds as tenaciously as a faithful husband will vindicate the virtues of the termagant spouse that gives him a curtain lecture every night of his life.

The young men call old Christy their "professor of equitation," and in accounting for the appellation, they let me into some particulars of the squire's mode of bringing up his children. There is an odd mixture of eccentricity and good sense in all the opinions of my worthy host. His mind is like modern Gothic, where plain brickwork is set off with pointed arches and plain tracery. Though the main groundwork of his opinions is correct, yet he has a thousand little notions, picked up from old books, which stand out whimsically on the surface of his mind.

Thus, in educating his boys, he chose Peachum, Markham, and such old English writers, for his manuals. At an early age he took the lads out of their mother's hands, who was disposed, as mothers are apt to be, to make fine orderly children of them, that should keep out of sun and rain, and never soil their hands, nor tear their clothes.

In place of this, the squire turned them loose to run free and wild about the park, without heeding wind or weather. He was also particularly attentive in making them bold and expert horsemen; and these were the days when old Christy, the huntsman, enjoyed great importance, as the lads were put

under his care to practise them at the leaping-bars, and to keep an eye upon them in the chase.

The squire always objected to their using carriages of any kind, and is still a little tenacious on this point. He often rails against the universal use of carriages, and quotes the words of honest Nashe to that effect. "It was thought," says Nashe in his *Quaternio*, "a kind of solecism, and to savour of effeminacy, for a young gentleman in the flourishing time of his age to creep into a coach, and to shroud himself from wind and weather: our great delight was to out-brave the blustering boreas upon a great horse; to arm and prepare ourselves to go with Mars and Bellona into the field was our sport and pastime; coaches and caroches we left unto them for whom they were first invented, for ladies and gentlemen, and decrepit age and impotent people."

The squire insists that the English gentlemen have lost much of their hardiness and manhood since the introduction of carriages. "Compare," he will say, "the fine gentleman of former times, ever on horseback, booted and spurred, and travel-stained, but open, frank, manly, and chivalrous, with the fine gentleman of the present day, full of affectation and effeminacy, rolling along a turnpike in his voluptuous vehicle. The young men of those days were rendered brave, and lofty, and generous, in their notions, by almost living in their saddles, and having, their foaming steeds 'like proud seas under them.' There is something," he adds, "in bestriding a fine horse, that makes a man feel more than mortal. He seems to have doubled his nature, and to have added to his own courage and sagacity, the power, the speed, and stateliness of the superb animal on which he is mounted."

"It is a great delight," says old Nashe, "to see a young gentleman with his skill and cunning, by his voice, rod, and spur, better to manage and to command the great Bucephalus, than the strongest Milo, with all his strength; one while to see him make him tread, trot, and gallop the ring; and one after to see him make him gather up roundly, to bear his head steadily; to run a full career swiftly; to stop a sudden lightly; anon after to see him make him advance, to yorke, to go back and side long, to turn on either hand; to gallop the gallop galliard; to do the capriole, the chambetta, and dance the curvetty."

In conformity to these ideas, the squire had them all on horseback at an early age, and made them ride, slap dash,

about the country, without flinching at hedge or ditch, or stone wall, to the imminent danger of their necks.

Even the fair Julia was partially included in this system; and, under the instructions of old Christy, has become one of the best horsewomen in the county. The squire says it is better than all the cosmetics and sweeteners of the breath that ever were invented. He extols the horsemanship of the ladies in former times, when Queen Elizabeth would scarcely suffer the rain to stop her accustomed ride. "And then think," he will say, "what nobler and sweeter beings it made them. What a difference must there be, both in mind and body, between a joyous high-spirited dame of those days, glowing with health and exercise, freshened by every breeze that blows, seated loftily and gracefully on her saddle, with plume on head, and hawk on hand, and her descendant of the present day, the pale victim of routs and ball-rooms, sunk languidly in one corner of an enervating carriage."

The squire's equestrian system has been attended with great success, for his sons, having passed through the whole course of instruction without breaking neck or limb, are now healthful, spirited, and active, and have the true Englishman's love for a horse. If their manliness and frankness are praised in their father's hearing, he quotes the old Persian maxim, and says, they have been taught "to ride, to shoot, and to speak the truth."

It is true the Oxonian has now and then practised the old gentleman's doctrines a little in "the extreme. He is a gay youngster, rather fonder of his horse than his book, with a little dash of the dandy; though the ladies all declare that he is "the flower of the flock." The first year that he was sent to Oxford, he had a tutor appointed to overlook him, a dry chip of the university. When he returned home in the vacation, the squire made many inquiries about how he liked his college, his studies, and his tutor.

"Oh, as to my tutor, sir, I have parted with him some time since."

"You have; and, pray, why so?"

"Oh, sir, hunting was all the go at our college, and I was a little short of funds; so I discharged my tutor, and took a horse, you know."

"Ah, I was not aware of that, Tom," said the squire, mildly.

When Tom returned to college his allowance was doubled, that he might be enabled to keep both horse and tutor.

LOVE SYMPTOMS.

I will now begin to sigh, read poets, look pale, go neatly, and be most apparently in love.

MARSTON.

I SHOULD not be surprised if we should have another pair of turtles at the Hall, for Master Simon has informed me, in great confidence, that he suspects the general of some design upon the susceptible heart of Lady Lillycraft. I have, indeed, noticed a growing attention and courtesy in the veteran towards her ladyship; he softens very much in her company, sits by her at table, and entertains her with long stories about Seringapatam, and pleasant anecdotes of the Mulligatawney club. I have even seen him present her with a full-blown rose from the hot-house, in a style of the most captivating gallantry, and it was accepted with great suavity and graciousness; for her ladyship delights in receiving the homage and attention of the sex.

Indeed, the general was one of the earliest admirers that dangled in her train during her short reign of beauty; and they flirted together for half a season in London, some thirty or forty years since. She reminded him lately, in the course of conversation about former days, of the time when he used to ride a white horse and to canter so gallantly by the side of her carriage in Hyde Park; whereupon I have remarked that the veteran has regularly escorted her since, when she rides out on horseback; and I suspect he almost persuades himself that he makes as captivating an appearance as in his youthful days.

It would be an interesting and memorable circumstance in the chronicles of Cupid, if this spark of the tender passion, after lying dormant for such a length of time, should again be fanned into a flame, from amidst the ashes of two burnt out hearts. It would be an instance of perdurable fidelity, worthy of being placed beside those recorded in one of the squire's favourite tomes, commemorating the constancy of the olden times; in which times, we are told, "Men and wymmen coulde love togyders seven yeres, and no licours luste swere betwene them, and thenne was love, trouthe, and feythfulness; and lo in lyke wyse was used love in Kyng Arthurs dayes."*

* Mort d'Arthur.

Still, however, this may be nothing but a little venerable flirtation, the general being a veteran dangle; and the good lady habituated to these kind of attentions. Master Simon, on the other hand, thinks the general is looking about him with the wary eye of an old campaigner; and now that he is on the wane, is desirous of getting into warm winter quarters.

Much allowance, however, must be made for Master Simon's uneasiness on the subject, for he looks on Lady Lillycraft's house as one of the strongholds where he is lord of the ascendant; and, with all his admiration of the general, I much doubt whether he would like to see him lord of the lady and the establishment.

There are certain other symptoms, notwithstanding, that give an air of probability of Master Simon's intimations. Thus, for instance, I have observed that the general has been very assiduous in his attentions to her ladyship's dogs, and has several times exposed his fingers to imminent jeopardy, in attempting to pat Beauty on the head. It is to be hoped his advances to the mistress will be more favourably received, as all his overtures towards a caress are greeted by the pestilent little cur with a wary kindling of the eye, and a most venomous growl.

He has, moreover, been very complaisant towards the lady's gentlewoman, the immaculate Mrs. Hannah, whom he used to speak of in a way that I do not choose to mention. Whether she has the same suspicions with Master Simon or not, I cannot say; but she receives his civilities with no better grace than the implacable Beauty; unscrewing her mouth into a most acid smile, and looking as though she could bite a piece out of him. In short the poor general seems to have as formidable foes to contend with as a hero of ancient fairy tale; who had to fight his way to his enchanted princess through ferocious monsters of every kind, and to encounter the brimstone terrors of some fiery dragon.

There is still another circumstance which inclines me to give very considerable credit to Master Simon's suspicions. Lady Lillycraft is very fond of quoting poetry, and the conversation often turns upon it, on which occasions the general is thrown completely out. It happened the other day that Spenser's Fairy Queen was the theme for the great part of the morning, and the poor general sat perfectly silent. I

found him not long after in the library, with spectacles on nose, a book in his hand, and fast asleep. On my approach he awoke, slipt the spectacles into his pocket, and began to read very attentively. After a little while he put a paper in the place, and laid the volume aside, which I perceived was the *Fairy Queen*. I have had the curiosity to watch how he got on in his poetical studies; but though I have repeatedly seen him with the book in his hand, yet I find the paper has not advanced above three or four pages; the general being extremely apt to fall asleep when he reads.

FALCONRY.

Ne is there hawk which mantleth on her perch,
Whether high tow'ring or accousting low,
But I the measure of her flight doe search,
And all her prey and all her diet know. SPENSER.

THERE are several grand sources of lamentation furnished to the worthy squire, by the improvement of society, and the grievous advancement of knowledge; among which there is none, I believe, that causes him more frequent regret than the unfortunate invention of gunpowder. To this, he continually traces the decay of some favourite custom, and, indeed, the general downfall of all chivalrous and romantic usages. "English soldiers," he says, "have never been the men they were in the days of the cross-bow and the long-bow; when they depended upon the strength of the arm, and the English archer could draw a cloth yard-shaft to the head. These were the times when, at the battles of Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, the French chivalry was completely destroyed by the bowmen of England. The yeomanry, too, have never been what they were, when, in times of peace, they were constantly exercised with the bow, and archery was a favourite holiday pastime."

Among the other evils which have followed in the train of this fatal invention of gunpowder, the squire classes the total decline of the noble art of falconry. "Shooting," he says, "is a skulking, treacherous, solitary sport in comparison; but hawking was a gallant, open, sunshiny recreation; it was the generous sport of hunting carried into the skies."

"It was, moreover," he says, "according to Braithewaite, the stately amusement of 'high and mounting spirits;' for, as the old Welsh proverb affirms, in those times 'You might know a gentleman by his hawk, horse, and greyhound.' Indeed, a cavalier was seldom seen abroad without his hawk on his fist; and even a lady of rank did not think herself completely equipped, in riding forth, unless she had her tassel-gentel held by jesses on her delicate hand. It was thought in those excellent days, according to an old writer, 'quite sufficient for noblemen to winde their horn, and to carry their hawke fair; and leave study and learning to the children of mean people.'"

Knowing the good squire's hobby, therefore, I have not been surprised at finding that, among the various recreations of former times which he has endeavoured to revive in the little world in which he rules, he has bestowed great attention on the noble art of falconry. In this he of course has been seconded by his indefatigable coadjutor, Master Simon: and even the parson has thrown considerable light on their labours, by various hints on the subject, which he has met with in old English works. As to the precious work of that famous dame, Juliana Barnes; the Gentleman's Academie, by Markham; and the other well-known treatises that were the manuals of ancient sportsmen, they have them at their fingers' ends; but they have more especially studied some old tapestry in the house, whereon is represented a party of cavaliers and stately dames, with doublets, caps, and flaunting feathers, mounted on horse, with attendants on foot, all in animated pursuit of the game.

The squire has discountenanced the killing of any hawks in his neighbourhood, but gives a liberal bounty for all that are brought him alive; so that the Hall is well stocked with all kinds of birds of prey. On these he and Master Simon have exhausted their patience and ingenuity, endeavouring to "reclaim" them, as it is termed, and to train them up for the sport; but they have met with continual checks and disappointments. Their feathered school has turned out the most untractable and graceless scholars; nor is it the least of their trouble to drill the retainers who were to act as ushers under them, and to take immediate charge of these refractory birds. Old Christy and the gamekeeper both, for a time, set their faces against the whole plan of education; Christy having

been nettled at hearing what he terms a wild-goose chase put on a par with a fox-hunt; and the gamekeeper having always been accustomed to look upon hawks as arrant poachers, which it was his duty to shoot down, and nail, in terrorem, against the out-houses.

Christy has at length taken the matter in hand, but has done still more mischief by his intermeddling. He is as positive and wrong-headed about this as he is about hunting. Master Simon has continual disputes with him as to feeding and training the hawks. He reads to him long passages from the old authors I have mentioned; but Christy, who cannot read, has a sovereign contempt for all book-knowledge, and persists in treating the hawks according to his own notions, which are drawn from his experience, in younger days, in rearing of game cocks.

The consequence is, that, between these jarring systems, the poor birds have had a most trying and unhappy time of it. Many have fallen victims to Christy's feeding and Master Simon's physicking; for the latter has gone to work *secundum artem*, and has given them all the vomitings and scourings laid down in the books; never were poor hawks so fed and physicked before. Others have been lost by being but half "reclaimed," or tamed; for on being taken into the field, they have "raked" after the game quite out of hearing of the call, and never returned to school.

All these disappointments had been petty, yet sore grievances to the squire, and had made him to despond about success. He has lately, however, been made happy by the receipt of a fine Welsh falcon, which Master Simon terms a stately highflyer. It is a present from the squire's friend, Sir Watkyn Williams Wynn; and is, no doubt, a descendant of some ancient line of Welsh princes of the air, that have long lorded it over their kingdom of clouds, from Wynnstay to the very summit of Snowdon, or the brow of Penmanmawr.

Ever since the squire received this invaluable present, he has been as impatient to sally forth and make proof of it, as was Don Quixote to assay his suit of armour. There have been some demurs as to whether the bird was in proper health and training; but these have been overruled by the vehement desire to play with a new toy; and it has been determined, right or wrong, in season or out of season, to have a day's sport in hawking to-morrow.

The Hall, as usual, whenever the squire is about to make some new sally on his hobby, is all agog with the thing. Miss Templeton, who is brought up in reverence for all her guardian's humours, has proposed to be of the party, and Lady Lillycraft has talked also of riding out to the scene of action and looking on. This has gratified the old gentleman extremely; he hails it as an auspicious omen of the revival of falconry, and does not despair but the time will come when it will be again the pride of a fine lady to carry about a noble falcon in preference to a parrot or a lap-dog.

I have amused myself with the bustling preparations of that busy spirit, Master Simon, and the continual thwartings he receives from that genuine son of a pepper-box, old Christy. They have had half a dozen consultations about how the hawk is to be prepared for the morning's sport. Old Nimrod, as usual, has always got in a pet, upon which Master Simon has invariably given up the point, observing in a good-humoured tone, "Well, well, have it your own way, Christy; only don't put yourself in a passion;" a reply which always nettles the old man ten times more than ever.

HAWKING.

The soaring hawk, from fist that flies,
Her falconer doth constrain
Sometimes to range the ground about
To find her out again;
And if by sight, or sound of bell,
His falcon he may see,
Wo ho! he cries, with cheerful voice—
The gladdest man is he.

HANDEFULL OF PLEASANT DELITES.

At an early hour this morning the Hall was in a bustle, preparing for the sport of the day. I heard Master Simon whistling and singing under my window at sunrise, as he was preparing the jesses for the hawk's legs, and could distinguish now and then a stanza of one of his favourite old ditties:

"In peascod time, when hound to horn
Gives note that buck be kill'd;
And little boy with pipe of corn
Is tending sheep a-field," &c.

A hearty breakfast, well flanked by cold meats, was served up in the great Hall. The whole garrison of retainers and hangers-on were in motion, reinforced by volunteer idlers from the village. The horses were led up and down before the door; everybody had something to say and something to do, and hurried hither and thither; there was a direful yelping of dogs; some that were to accompany us being eager to set off, and others that were to stay at home being whipped back to their kennels. In short, for once, the good squire's mansion might have been taken as a good specimen of one of the rantipole establishments of the good old feudal times.

Breakfast being finished, the chivalry of the Hall prepared to take the field. The fair Julia was of the party, in a hunting-dress, with a light plume of feathers in her riding-hat. As she mounted her favourite Galloway, I remarked, with pleasure, that old Christy forgot his usual crustiness, and hastened to adjust her saddle and bridle. He touched his cap as she smiled on him and thanked him; and then, looking round at the other attendants, gave a knowing nod of his head, in which I read pride and exultation at the charming appearance of his pupil.

Lady Lillycraft had likewise determined to witness the sport. She was dressed in her broad white beaver, tied under the chin, and a riding-habit of the last century. She rode her sleek, ambling pony, whose motion was as easy as a rocking-chair; and was gallantly escorted by the general, who looked not unlike one of the doughty heroes in the old prints of the battle of Blenheim. The parson, likewise, accompanied her on the other side; for this was a learned amusement in which he took great interest; and, indeed, had given much counsel, from his knowledge of old customs.

At length everything was arranged, and off we set from the Hall. The exercise on horseback puts one in fine spirits; and the scene was gay and animating. The young men of the family accompanied Miss Templeton. She sat lightly and gracefully in her saddle, her plumes dancing and waving in the air; and the group had a charming effect as they appeared and disappeared among the trees, cantering along, with the bounding animation of youth. The squire and Master Simon rode together, accompanied by old Christy, mounted on Pepper. The latter bore the hawk on his fist, as

he insisted the bird was most accustomed to him. There was a rabble rout an foot, composed of retainers from the Hall, and some idlers from the village, with two or three spaniels, for the purpose of starting the game.

A kind of corps de reserve came on quietly in the rear, composed of Lady Lillycraft, General Harbottle, the parson, and a fat footman. Her ladyship ambled gently along on her pony, while the general, mounted on a tall hunter, looked down upon her with an air of the most protecting gallantry.

For my part, being no sportsman, I kept with this last party, or rather lagged behind, that I might take in the whole picture; and the parson occasionally slackened his pace and jogged on in company with me.

The sport led us at some distance from the Hall, in a soft meadow reeking with the moist verdure of spring. A little river ran through it, bordered by willows, which had put forth their tender early foliage. The sportsmen were in quest of herons which were said to keep about this stream.

There was some disputing already among the leaders of the sport. The squire, Master Simon, and old Christy, came every now and then to a pause, to consult together, like the field officers in an army; and I saw, by certain motions of the head, that Christy was as positive as any old wrong-headed German commander.

As we were prancing up this quiet meadow every sound we made was answered by a distinct echo, from the sunny wall of an old building, that lay on the opposite margin of the stream; and I paused to listen to the "spirit of a sound," which seems to love such quiet and beautiful places. The parson informed me that this was the ruin of an ancient grange, and was supposed, by the country people, to be haunted by a dobbie, a kind of rural sprite, something like Robin-good-fellow. They often fancied the echo to be the voice of the dobbie answering them, and were rather shy of disturbing it after dark. He added, that the squire was very careful of this ruin, on account of the superstition connected with it. As I considered this local habitation of an "airy nothing," I called to mind the fine description of an echo in Webster's *Duchess of Malfy*:

"'Yond side o' th' river lies a wall,
Piece of a cloister, which in my opinion
Gives the best echo that you have ever heard:

So plain in the distinction of our words
That many have supposed it a spirit
That answers."

The parson went on to comment on a pleasing and fanciful appellation which the Jews of old gave to the echo, which they called Bath-kool, that is to say, "the daughter of the voice;" they considered it an oracle, supplying in the second temple the want of the Urim and Thummim, with which the first was honoured.* The little man was just entering very largely and learnedly upon the subject, when we were startled by a prodigious bawling, shouting, and yelping. A flight of crows, alarmed by the approach of our forces, had suddenly risen from a meadow; a cry was put up by the rabble rout on foot. "Now, Christy! now is your time, Christy!" The squire and Master Simon, who were beating up the river banks in quest of a heron, called out eagerly to Christy to keep quiet; the old man, vexed and bewildered by the confusion of voices, completely lost his head: in his flurry he slipped off the hood, cast off the falcon, and away flew the crows, and away soared the hawk.

I had paused on a rising ground, close to Lady Lillycraft and her escort, from whence I had a good view of the sport. I was pleased with the appearance of the party in the meadow, riding along in the direction that the bird flew; their bright beaming faces turned up to the bright skies as they watched the game; the attendants on foot scampering along, looking up, and calling out, and the dogs bounding and yelping with clamorous sympathy.

The hawk had singled out a quarry from among the carrion crew. It was curious to see the efforts of the two birds to get above each other; one to make the fatal swoop, the other to avoid it. Now they crossed athwart a bright feathery cloud, and now they were against the clear blue sky. I confess, being no sportsman, I was more interested for the poor bird that was striving for its life, than for the hawk that was playing the part of a mercenary soldier. At length the hawk got the upper hand, and made a rushing stoop at her quarry, but the latter made as sudden a surge downwards, and slanting up again evaded the blow, screaming and making the best of his way for a dry tree on the brow of a neighbouring hill; while the hawk, disappointed of her blow, soared up

* Bekker's *Monde Enchanté*.

again into the air, and appeared to be "raking" off. It was in vain old Christy called, and whistled, and endeavoured to lure her down; she paid no regard to him; and, indeed, his calls were drowned in the shouts and yelps of the army of militia that had followed him into the field.

Just then an exclamation from Lady Lillycraft made me turn my head. I beheld a complete confusion among the sportsmen in the little vale below us. They were galloping and running towards the edge of a bank; and I was shocked to see Miss Templeton's horse galloping at large without his rider. I rode to the place to which the others were hurrying, and when I reached the bank, which almost overhung the stream, I saw at the foot of it the fair Julia, pale, bleeding, and apparently lifeless, supported in the arms of her frantic lover.

In galloping heedlessly along, with her eyes turned upward, she had unwarily approached too near the bank; it had given way with her, and she and her horse had been precipitated into the pebbled margin of the river.

I never saw greater consternation. The captain was distracted; Lady Lillycraft fainting; the squire in dismay; and Master Simon at his wits' end. The beautiful creature at length showed signs of returning life; she opened her eyes; looked around her upon the anxious group, and comprehending in a moment the nature of the scene, gave a sweet smile, and putting her hand in her lover's, exclaimed feebly, "I am not much hurt, Guy!" I could have taken her to my heart for that single exclamation.

It was found, indeed, that she had escaped, almost miraculously, with a contusion of the head, a sprained ankle, and some slight bruises. After her wound was stanchd, she was taken to a neighbouring cottage until a carriage could be summoned to convey her home; and when this had arrived the cavalcade, which had issued forth so gaily on this enterprise, returned slowly and pensively to the Hall.

I had been charmed by the generous spirit shown by this young creature, who, amidst pain and danger, had been anxious only to relieve the distress of those around her. I was gratified, therefore, by the universal concern displayed by the domestics on our return. They came crowding down the avenue, each eager to render assistance. The butler stood ready with some curiously delicate cordial; the old

housekeeper was provided with half a dozen nostrums, prepared by her own hands, according to the family receipt book; while her niece, the melting Phoebe, having no other way of assisting, stood wringing her hands and weeping aloud.

The most material effect that is likely to follow this accident is a postponement of the nuptials, which were close at hand. Though I commiserate the impatience of the captain on that account, yet I shall not otherwise be sorry at the delay, as it will give me a better opportunity of studying the characters here assembled, with which I grow more and more entertained.

I cannot but perceive that the worthy squire is quite disconcerted at the unlucky result of his hawking experiment, and this unfortunate illustration of his eulogy on female equitation. Old Christy, too, is very waspish, having been sorely twitted by Master Simon for having let his hawk fly at carrion. As to the falcon, in the confusion occasioned by the fair Julia's disaster, the bird was totally forgotten. I make no doubt she has made the best of her way back to the hospitable Hall of Sir Watkyn Williams Wynn; and may very possibly, at this present writing, be pluming her wings among the breezy bowers of Wynnstay.

ST. MARK'S EVE.

O 'tis a fearful thing to be no more,
 Or if to be, to wander after death!
 To walk as spirits do, in brakes all day,
 And, when the darkness comes, to glide in paths
 That lead to graves; and in the silent vault,
 Where lies your own pale shroud, to hover o'er it,
 Striving to enter your forbidden corpse.

DRYDEN.

THE conversation this evening at supper table took a curious turn on the subject of a superstition, formerly very prevalent in this part of the country, relative to the present night of the year, which is the Eve of St. Mark. It was believed, the parson informed us, that if any one would watch in the church porch on this eve, for three successive years, from eleven to one o'clock at night, he would see on the third

year the shades of those of the parish who were to die in the course of the year, pass by him into church clad in their usual apparel.

Dismal as such a sight would be, he assured us that it was formerly a frequent thing for persons to make the necessary vigils. He had known more than one instance in his time. One old woman who pretended to have seen this phantom procession, was an object of great awe for the whole year afterwards, and caused much uneasiness and mischief. If she shook her head mysteriously at a person, it was like a death-warrant; and she had nearly caused the death of a sick person by looking ruefully in at the window.

There was also an old man, not many years since, of a sullen, melancholy temperament, who had kept two vigils, and began to excite some talk in the village, when, fortunately for the public comfort, he died shortly after his third watching; very probably from a cold that he had taken, as the night was tempestuous. It was reported about the village, however, that he had seen his own phantom pass by him into the church.

This led to the mention of another superstition of an equally strange and melancholy kind, which, however, is chiefly confined to Wales. It is respecting what are called corpse candles, little wandering fires, of a pale bluish light, that move about like tapers in the open air, and are supposed to designate the way some corpse is to go. One was seen at Lanylar, late at night, hovering up and down, along the bank of the Istwith, and was watched by the neighbours until they were tired, and went to bed. Not long afterwards there came a comely country lass, from Montgomeryshire, to see her friends, who dwelt on the opposite side of the river. She thought to ford the stream at the very place where the light had been first seen, but was dissuaded on account of the height of the flood. She walked to and fro along the bank, just where the candle had moved, waiting for the subsiding of the water. She at length endeavoured to cross, but the poor girl was drowned in the attempt.*

There was something mournful in this little anecdote of rural superstition, that seemed to affect all the listeners. Indeed, it is curious to remark how completely a conversation of the kind will absorb the attention of a circle, and sober

* Aubrey's Miscel.

down its gaiety, however boisterous. By degrees I noticed that every one was leaning forward over the table, with eyes earnestly fixed upon the parson, and at the mention of corpse candles, which had been seen about the chamber of a young lady who died on the eve of her wedding-day, Lady Lillycraft turned pale.

I have witnessed the introduction of stories of the kind into various evening circles; they were often commenced in jest, and listened to with smiles; but I never knew the most gay or the most enlightened of audiences, that were not, if the conversation continued for any length of time, completely and solemnly interested in it. There is, I believe, a degree of superstition lurking in every mind; and I doubt if any one can thoroughly examine all his secret notions and impulses without detecting it, hidden, perhaps, even from himself. It seems, indeed, to be a part of our nature, like instinct in animals, and to act independently of our reason. It is often found existing in lofty natures, especially those that are poetical and aspiring. A great and extraordinary poet of our day, whose life and writings evince a mind subject to powerful exaltation, is said to believe in omens and secret intimations. Cæsar, it is well known, was greatly under the influence of such belief; and Napoleon had his good and evil days, and his presiding star.

As to the worthy parson, I have no doubt that he is strongly inclined to superstition. He is naturally credulous, and passes so much of his time searching out popular traditions and supernatural tales, that his mind has probably become infected by them. He has lately been immersed in the DemonolatRIA of Nicholas Remigius concerning supernatural occurrences in Lorraine, and the writings of Joachimus Camerarius, called by Vossius the Phoenix of Germany; and he entertains the ladies with stories from them, that make them almost afraid to go to bed at night. I have been charmed myself with some of the wild, little superstitions which he has adduced from Blefkenius, Scheffer, and others: such as those of the Laplanders about the domestic spirits which wake them at night, and summon them to go and fish; of Thor, the deity of Thunder, who has power of life and death, health and sickness, and who, armed with the rainbow, shoots his arrows at those evil demons that live on the tops of rocks and mountains, and infest the lakes; of the Juhles

or Juhla-folket, vagrant troops of spirits, which roam the air and wander up and down by forests and mountains, and the moonlight sides of hills.

The parson never openly professes his belief in ghosts, but I have remarked that he has a suspicious way of pressing great names into the defence of supernatural doctrines, and making philosophers and saints fight for him. He expatiates at large on the opinions of the ancient philosophers about larvae, or nocturnal phantoms, the spirits of the wicked, which wandered like exiles about the earth; and about those spiritual beings which abode in the air, but descended occasionally to earth, and mingled among mortals, acting as agents between them and the gods. He quotes also from Philo the rabbi, the contemporary of the apostles, and, according to some, the friend of St. Paul, who says that the air is full of spirits of different ranks; some destined to exist for a time in mortal bodies, from which, being emancipated, they pass and repass between heaven and earth, as agents or messengers in the service of the Deity.

But the worthy little man assumes a bolder tone when he quotes it from the fathers of the church; such as St. Jerome, who gives it as the opinion of all the doctors, that the air is filled with powers opposed to each other; and Lactantius, who says that corrupt and dangerous spirits wander over the earth, and seek to console themselves for their own fall by effecting the ruin of the human race; and Clemens Alexandrinus, who is of opinion that the souls of the blessed have knowledge of what passes among men, the same as angels have.

I am now alone in my chamber, but these themes have taken such hold of my imagination, that I cannot sleep. The room in which I sit is just fitted to foster such a state of mind. The walls are hung with tapestry, the figures of which are faded, and look like unsubstantial shapes melting away from sight. Over the fireplace is the portrait of a lady, who, according to the housekeeper's tradition, pined to death for the loss of her lover in the battle of Blenheim. She has a most pale and plaintive countenance, and seems to fix her eyes mournfully upon me. The family have long since retired. I have heard their steps die away, and the distant doors clap to after them. The murmur of voices, and the peal of remote laughter, no longer reach the ear. The clock

from the church, in which so many of the former inhabitants of this house lie buried, has chimed the awful hour of midnight.

I have sat by the window and mused upon the dusky landscape, watching the lights disappearing, one by one, from the distant village; and the moon rising in her silent majesty, and leading up all the silver pomp of heaven. As I have gazed upon these quiet groves and shadowy lawns, silvered over, and imperfectly lighted by streaks of dewy moonshine, my mind has been crowded by "thick coming fancies" concerning those spiritual beings which

"——— walk the earth

Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep."

Are there, indeed, such beings? Is this space between us and the Deity filled up by innumerable orders of spiritual beings, forming the same gradations between the human soul and divine perfection, that we see prevailing from humanity downwards to the meanest insect? It is a sublime and beautiful doctrine, inculcated by the early fathers, that there are guardian angels appointed to watch over cities and nations; to take care of the welfare of good men, and to guard and guide the steps of helpless infancy. "Nothing," says St. Jerome, "gives us a greater idea of the dignity of our soul, than that God has given each of us, at the moment of our birth, an angel to have care over it."

Even the doctrine of departed spirits returning to visit the scenes and beings which were dear to them during the body's existence, though it has been debased by the absurd superstitions of the vulgar, in itself is awfully solemn and sublime. However lightly it may be ridiculed, yet the attention involuntarily yielded to it whenever it is made the subject of serious discussion; its prevalence in all ages and countries, and even among newly-discovered nations, that have had no previous interchange of thought with other parts of the world, prove it to be one of those mysterious, and almost instinctive beliefs, to which, if left to ourselves, we should naturally incline.

In spite of all the pride of reason and philosophy, a vague doubt will still lurk in the mind, and perhaps will never be perfectly eradicated; as it is concerning a matter that does not admit of a positive demonstration. Everything connected

with our spiritual nature is full of doubt and difficulty. "We are fearfully and wonderfully made;" we are surrounded by mysteries, and we are mysteries even to ourselves. Who yet has been able to comprehend and describe the nature of the soul, its connexion with the body, or in what part of the frame it is situated? We know merely that it does exist; but whence it came, and when it entered into us, and how it is retained, and where it is seated, and how it operates, are all matters of mere speculation and contradictory theories. If, then, we are thus ignorant of this spiritual essence, even while it forms a part of ourselves, and is continually present to our consciousness, how can we pretend to ascertain or to deny its powers and operations when released from its fleshy prison-house? It is more the manner, therefore, in which this superstition has been degraded, than its intrinsic absurdity, that has brought it into contempt. Raise it above the frivolous purposes to which it has been applied, strip it of the gloom and horror with which it has been surrounded, and there is none of the whole circle of visionary creeds that could more delightfully elevate the imagination, or more tenderly affect the heart. It would become a sovereign comfort at the bed of death, soothing the bitter tear wrung from us by the agony of our mortal separation. What could be more consoling than the idea, that the souls of those whom we once loved were permitted to return and watch over our welfare? That affectionate and guardian spirits sat by our pillows when we slept, keeping a vigil over our most helpless hours? That beauty and innocence, which had languished into the tomb, yet smiled unseen around us, revealing themselves in those blest dreams wherein we live over again the hours of past endearment? A belief of this kind would, I should think, be a new incentive to virtue; rendering us circumspect even in our most secret moments, from the idea that those we once loved and honoured were invisible witnesses of all our actions.

It would take away, too, from that loneliness and destitution which we are apt to feel more and more as we get on in our pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world, and find that those who set forward with us, lovingly and cheerily, on the journey, have one by one dropped away from our side. Place the superstition in this light, and I confess I should like to be a believer in it. I see nothing in it that is incompatible with

the tender and merciful nature of our religion, nor revolting to the wishes and affections of the heart.

There are departed beings that I have loved as I never again shall love in this world;—that have loved me as I never again shall be loved! If such beings do ever retain in their blessed spheres the attachments which they felt on earth; if they take an interest in the poor concerns of transient mortality, and are permitted to hold communion with those whom they have loved on earth, I feel as if now, at this deep hour of night, in this silence and solitude, I could receive their visitation with the most solemn, but unalloyed delight.

In truth, such visitations would be too happy for this world; they would be incompatible with the nature of this imperfect state of being. We are here placed in a mere scene of spiritual thralldom and restraint. Our souls are shut in and limited by bonds and barriers; shackled by mortal infirmities, and subject to all the gross impediments of matter. In vain would they seek to act independently of the body, and to mingle together in spiritual intercourse. They can only act here through their fleshy organs. Their earthly loves are made of no transient embraces and long separations. The most intimate friendship, of what brief and scattered portions of time does it consist! We take each other by the hand, and we exchange a few words and looks of kindness, and we rejoice together for a few short moments, and then days, months, years intervene, and we see and know nothing of each other. Or, granting that we dwell together for the full season of this our mortal life, the grave soon closes its gates between us, and then our spirits are doomed to remain in separation and widowhood; until they meet again in that more perfect state of being, where soul will dwell with soul in blissful communion, and there will be neither death, nor absence, nor anything else to interrupt our felicity.

* * In the foregoing paper I have alluded to the writings of some of the old Jewish rabbins. They abound with wild theories; but among them are many truly poetical flights; and their ideas are often very beautifully expressed. Their speculations on the nature of the angels are curious and fanciful, though much resembling the doctrines of the ancient philosophers. In the writings of the Rabbi Eleazer is an account of the temptation of our first parents and the fall of the

angels, which the parson pointed out to me as having probably furnished some of the groundwork for "Paradise Lost."

According to Eleazer, the ministering angels said to the Deity, "What is there in man that thou makest him of such importance? Is he anything else than vanity? for he can scarcely reason a little on terrestrial things." To which God replied, "Do you imagine that I will be exalted and glorified only by you here above? I am the same below that I am here. Who is there among you that can call all the creatures by their names?" There was none found among them that could do so. At that moment Adam arose, and called all the creatures by their names. Seeing which, the ministering angels said among themselves, "Let us consult together how we may cause Adam to sin against the Creator, otherwise he will not fail to become our master."

Sammaël, who was a great prince in the heavens, was present at this council, with the saints of the first order and the seraphim of six bands. Sammaël chose several out of the twelve orders to accompany him, and descended below, for the purpose of visiting all the creatures which God had created. He found none more cunning and more fit to do evil than the serpent.

The rabbi then treats of the seduction and the fall of man; of the consequent fall of the demon, and the punishment which God inflicted on Adam, Eve, and the serpent. "He made them all come before him; pronounced nine maledictions on Adam and Eve, and condemned them to suffer death; and he precipitated Sammaël and all his band from heaven. He cut off the feet of the serpent, which had before the figure of a camel (Sammaël having mounted on him), and he cursed him among all beasts and animals."

GENTILITY.

— True Gentrie standeth in the trade
Of virtuous life, not in the fleshly line;
For blood is knit, but Gentrie is divine.

MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES.

I HAVE mentioned some peculiarities of the squire in the education of his sons; but I would not have it thought that his instructions were directed chiefly to their personal ac-

accomplishments. He took great pains also to form their minds, and to inculcate what he calls good old English principles, such as are laid down in the writings of Peacham and his contemporaries. There is one author of whom he cannot speak without indignation, which is Chesterfield. He avers that he did much, for a time, to injure the true national character, and to introduce, instead of open manly sincerity, a hollow perfidious courtliness. "His maxims," he affirms, "were calculated to chill the delightful enthusiasm of youth; to make them ashamed of that romance which is the dawn of generous manhood, and to impart to them a cold polish and a premature worldliness."

"Many of Lord Chesterfield's maxims would make a young man a mere man of pleasure; but an English gentleman should not be a mere man of pleasure. He has no right to such selfish indulgence. His ease, his leisure, his opulence, are debts due to his country, which he must ever stand ready to discharge. He should be a man at all points; simple, frank, courteous, intelligent, accomplished, and informed; upright, intrepid, and disinterested; one that can mingle among freemen; that can cope with statesmen; that can champion his country and its rights either at home or abroad. In a country like England, where there is such free and unbounded scope for the exertion of intellect, and where opinion and example have such weight with the people, every gentleman of fortune and leisure should feel himself bound to employ himself in some way towards promoting the prosperity or glory of the nation. In a country where intellect and action are trammelled and restrained, men of rank and fortune may become idlers and triflers with impunity; but an English coxcomb is inexcusable; and this, perhaps, is the reason why he is the most offensive and insupportable coxcomb in the world."

The squire, as Frank Bracebridge informs me, would often hold forth in this manner to his sons, when they were about leaving the paternal roof; one to travel abroad, one to go to the army, and one to the university. He used to have them with him in the library, which is hung with the portraits of Sydney, Surrey, Raleigh, Wyat, and others. "Look at those models of true English gentlemen, my sons," he would say with enthusiasm; "those were men that wreathed the graces of the most delicate and refined taste around the stern virtues

of the soldier; that mingled what was gentle and gracious with what was hardy and manly; that possessed the true chivalry of spirit, which is the exalted essence of manhood. They are the lights by which the youth of the country should array themselves. They were the patterns and the idols of their country at home; they were the illustrators of its dignity abroad. 'Surrey,' says Camden, 'was the first nobleman that illustrated his high birth with the beauty of learning. He was acknowledged to be the gallantest man, the politest lover, and the completest gentleman of his time.' And as to Wyatt, his friend Surrey most amiably testifies of him, that his person was majestic and beautiful, his visage 'stern and mild; that he sung and played the lute with remarkable sweetness; spoke foreign languages with grace and fluency, and possessed an inexhaustible fund of wit.' And see what a high commendation is passed upon these illustrious friends: 'They were the two chieftains, who, having travelled into Italy, and there tasted the sweet and stately measures and style of the Italian poetry, greatly polished our rude and homely manner of vulgar poetry from what it had been before, and therefore may be justly called the reformers of our English poetry and style.' And Sir Philip Sydney, who has left us such monuments of elegant thought and generous sentiment, and who illustrated his chivalrous spirit so gloriously in the field. And Sir Walter Raleigh, the elegant courtier, the intrepid soldier, the enterprising discoverer, the enlightened philosopher, the magnanimous martyr. These are the men for English gentlemen to study. Chesterfield, with his cold and courtly maxims, would have chilled and impoverished such spirits. He would have blighted all the budding romance of their temperaments. Sydney would never have written his *Arcadia*, nor Surrey have challenged the world in vindication of the beauties of his *Geraldine*. These are the men, my sons," the squire will continue, "that show to what our national character may be exalted, when its strong and powerful qualities are duly wrought up and refined. The solidest bodies are capable of the highest polish; and there is no character that may be wrought to a more exquisite and unsullied brightness than that of the true English gentleman."

When Guy was about to depart for the army, the squire again took him aside, and gave him a long exhortation. He

warned him against that affectation of cold-blooded indifference, which he was told was cultivated by the young British officers, among whom it was a study to "sink the soldier" in the mere man of fashion. "A soldier," said he, "without pride and enthusiasm in his profession, is a mere sanguinary hireling. Nothing distinguishes them from the mercenary bravo but a spirit of patriotism, or a thirst for glory. It is the fashion, now-a-days, my son," said he, "to laugh at the spirit of chivalry; when that spirit is really extinct, the profession of the soldier becomes a mere trade of blood." He then set before him the conduct of Edward the Black Prince, who is his mirror of chivalry; valiant, generous, affable, humane; gallant in the field: but when he came to dwell on his courtesy towards his prisoner, the king of France; how he received him into his tent rather as a conqueror than as a captive; attended on him at table like one of his retinue; rode uncovered beside him on his entry into London, mounted on a common palfrey, while his prisoner was mounted in state on a white steed of stately beauty; the tears of enthusiasm stood in the old gentleman's eyes.

Finally, on taking leave, the good squire put in his son's hands, as a manual, one of his favourite old volumes, the *Life of the Chevalier Bayard*, by Godefroy; on a blank page of which he had written an extract from the *Mort d'Arthur*, containing the eulogy of Sir Ector over the body of Sir Launcelot of the Lake, which the squire considers as comprising the excellencies of a true soldier. "Ah, Sir Launcelot! thou wert head of all Christian knights; now there thou liest: thou wert never matched of none earthly knights-hands. And thou wert the curtiest knight that ever bare shield. And thou wert the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrood horse; and thou wert the truest lover of a sinfull man that ever loved woman. And thou wert the kindest man that ever strook with sword; and thou wert the goodliest person that ever came among the presse of knights. And thou wert the meekest man and the gentlest that ever eate in hall among ladies. And thou wert the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever putt spcare in the rest."

FORTUNE-TELLING.

Each city, each town, and every village,
 Affords us either an alms or pillage.
 And if the weather be cold and raw,
 Then in a barn we tumble on straw.
 If warm and fair, by yea-cock and nay-cock,
 The fields will afford us a hedge or a hay-cock.

MERRY BEGGARS.

As I was walking one evening with the Oxonian, Master Simon, and the general, in a meadow not far from the village, we heard the sound of a fiddle rudely played, and looking in the direction from whence it came, we saw a thread of smoke curling up from among the trees. The sound of music is always attractive; for, wherever there is music, there is good humour, or goodwill. We passed along a footpath, and had a peep, through a break in the hedge, at the musician and his party, when the Oxonian gave us a wink, and told us that if we would follow him we should have some sport.

It proved to be a gipsy encampment, consisting of three or four little cabins, or tents, made of blankets and sail cloth, spread over hoops that were stuck in the ground. It was on one side of a green lane, close under a hawthorn hedge, with a broad beech-tree spreading above it. A small rill tinkled along close by, through the fresh sward, that looked like a carpet.

A tea-kettle was hanging by a crooked piece of iron, over a fire made from dry sticks and leaves, and two old gipsies, in red cloaks, sat crouched on the grass, gossiping over their evening cup of tea; for these creatures, though they live in the open air, have their ideas of fireside comforts. There were two or three children sleeping on the straw with which the tents were littered; a couple of donkeys were grazing in the lane, and a thievish-looking dog was lying before the fire. Some of the younger gipsies were dancing to the music of a fiddle, played by a tall, slender stripling, in an old frock coat, with a peacock's feather stuck in his hatband.

As we approached, a gipsy girl, with a pair of fine roguish eyes, came up, and, as usual, offered to tell our fortunes. I could not but admire a certain degree of slattern elegance about the baggage. Her long black silken hair was curiously plaited in numerous small braids, and negligently put up in a

picturesque style that a painter might have been proud to have devised. Her dress was of a figured chintz, rather ragged, and not over clean, but of a variety of most harmonious and agreeable colours; for these beings have a singularly fine eye for colours. Her straw hat was in her hand, and a red cloak thrown over one arm.

The Oxonian offered at once to have his fortune told, and the girl began with the usual volubility of her race; but he drew her on one side near the hedge, as he said he had no idea of having his secrets overheard. I saw he was talking to her instead of she to him, and by his glancing towards us now and then, that he was giving the baggage some private hints. When they returned to us, he assumed a very serious air, "Zounds!" said he, "its very astonishing how these creatures come by their knowledge; this girl has told me some things that I thought no one knew but myself!"

The girl now assailed the general: "Come, your honour," said she, "I see by your face you're a lucky man; but you're not happy in your mind; you're not, indeed, sir; but have a good heart, and give me a good piece of silver, and I'll tell you a nice fortune."

The general had received all her approaches with a banter, and had suffered her to get hold of his hand; but at the mention of the piece of silver, he hemmed, looked grave, and turning to us, asked if we had not better continue our walk. "Come, my master," said the girl archly, "you'd not be in such a hurry, if you knew all that I could tell you about a fair lady that has a notion for you. Come, sir, old love burns strong; there's many a one comes to see weddings that go away brides themselves!" Here the girl whispered something in a low voice, at which the general coloured up, was a little fluttered, and suffered himself to be drawn aside under the hedge, where he appeared to listen to her with great earnestness, and at the end paid her half-a-crown with the air of a man that has got the worth of his money.

The girl next made her attack upon Master Simon, who, however, was too old a bird to be caught, knowing that it would end in an attack upon his purse, about which he is a little sensitive. As he has a great notion, however, of being considered a royster, he chucked her under the chin, played her off with rather broad jokes, and put on something of the rake-belly air, that we see now and then assumed on the stage

by the sad-boy gentlemen of the old school. "Ah, your honour," said the girl," with a malicious leer, "you were not in such a tantrum last year when I told you about the widow you know who; but if you had taken a friend's advice, you'd never have come away from Doncaster races with a flea in your ear!"

There was a secret sting in this speech that seemed quite to disconcert Master Simon. He jerked away his hand in a pet, smacked his whip, whistled to his dogs, and intimated that it was high time to go home. The girl, however, was determined not to lose her harvest. She now turned upon me, and, as I have a weakness of spirit where there is a pretty face concerned, she soon wheedled me out of my money, and, in return, read me a fortune, which, if it prove true, and I am determined to believe it, will make me one of the luckiest men in the chronicles of Cupid.

I saw that the Oxonian was at the bottom of all this oracular mystery, and was disposed to amuse himself with the general, whose tender approaches to the widow have attracted the notice of the wag. I was a little curious, however, to know the meaning of the dark hints which had so suddenly disconcerted Master Simon: and took occasion to fall in the rear with the Oxonian on our way home, when he laughed heartily at my questions, and gave me ample information on the subject.

The truth of the matter is, that Master Simon has met with a sad rebuff since my Christmas visit to the Hall. He used at that time to be joked about a widow, a fine dashing woman, as he privately informed me. I had supposed the pleasure he betrayed on these occasions resulted from the usual fondness of old bachelors for being teased about getting married, and about flirting, and being fickle and false-hearted. I am assured, however, that Master Simon had really persuaded himself the widow had a kindness for him; in consequence of which he had been at some extraordinary expense in new clothes, and had actually got Frank Bracebridge to order him a coat from Stultz. He began to throw out hints about the importance of a man's settling himself in life before he grew old; he would look grave whenever the widow and matrimony were mentioned in the same sentence; and privately asked the opinion of the squire and parson about the prudence of marrying a widow with a rich jointure, but who had several children.

An important member of a great family connexion cannot harp much upon the theme of matrimony without its taking wind; and it soon got buzzed about that Mr. Simon Braccbridge was actually gone to Doncaster races, with a new horse, but that he meant to return in a curricule with a lady by his side. Master Simon did, indeed, go to the races, and that with a new horse; and the dashing widow did make her appearance in her curricule; but it was unfortunately driven by a strapping young Irish dragoon, with whom even Master Simon's self-complacency would not allow him to enter into competition, and to whom she was married shortly after.

It was a matter of sore chagrin to Master Simon for several months, having never before been fully committed. The dullest head in the family had a joke upon him; and there is no one that likes less to be bantered than an absolute joker. He took refuge for a time at Lady Lillycraft's, until the matter should blow over; and occupied himself by looking over her accounts, regulating the village choir, and inculcating loyalty into a pet bullfinch by teaching him to whistle "God save the King."

He has now pretty nearly recovered from the mortification; holds up his head, and laughs as much as any one; again affects to pity married men, and is particularly facetious about widows, when Lady Lillycraft is not by. His only time of trial is when the general gets hold of him, who is infinitely heavy and persevering in his waggery, and will interweave a dull joke through the various topics of a whole dinner-time. Master Simon often parries these attacks by a stanza from his old work of "Cupid's Solicitor for Love:"

" 'Tis in vain to woo a widow over long,
In once or twice her mind you may perceive;
Widows are subtle, be they old or young,
And by their wiles young men they will deceive."

LOVE-CHARMS.

— Come, do not weep, my girl,
Forget him, pretty pensiveness; there will
Come others, every day, as good as he.

SIR J. SUCKLING.

THE approach of a wedding in a family is always an event

of great importance, but particularly so in a household like this, in a retired part of the country. Master Simon, who is a pervading spirit, and, through means of the butler and housekeeper, knows everything that goes forward, tells me that the maid-servants are continually trying their fortunes, and that the servants' hall has of late been quite a scene of incantation.

It is amusing to notice how the oddities of the head of a family flow down through all the branches. The squire, in the indulgence of his love of everything that smacks of old times, has held so many grave conversations with the parson at table, about popular superstitions and traditional rites, that they have been carried from the parlour to the kitchen by the listening domestics, and, being apparently sanctioned by such high authorities, the whole house has become infected by them.

The servants are all versed in the common modes of trying luck, and the charms to ensure constancy. They read their fortunes by drawing strokes in the ashes, or by repeating a form of words, and looking in a pail of water. St. Mark's Eve, I am told, was a busy time with them; being an appointed night for certain mystic ceremonies. Several of them sowed hemp-seed, to be reaped by their true lovers; and they even ventured upon the solemn and fearful preparation of the dumb-cake. This must be done fasting, and in silence. The ingredients are handed down in traditional form:—"An egg-shell full of salt, an egg-shell full of malt, and an egg-shell full of barley-meal." When the cake is ready, it is put upon a pan over the fire, and the future husband will appear, turn the cake, and retire; but if a word is spoken, or a fast is broken, during this awful ceremony, there is no knowing what horrible consequence would ensue!

The experiments in the present instance came to no result; they that sowed the hemp-seed forgot the magic rhyme that they were to pronounce, so the true lover never appeared; and as to the dumb-cake, what between the awful stillness they had to keep, and the awfulness of the midnight hour, their hearts failed them when they had put the cake in the pan, so that, on the striking of the great house-clock in the servants' hall, they were seized with a sudden panic, and ran out of the room, to which they did not return until morning, when they found the mystic cake burnt to a cinder.

The most persevering at these spells, however, is Phœbe Wilkins, the housekeeper's niece. As she is a kind of privileged personage, and rather idle, she has more time to occupy herself with these matters. She has always had her head full of love and matrimony. She knows the dreaming-book by heart, and is quite an oracle among the little girls of the family, who always come to her to interpret their dreams in the mornings.

During the present gaiety of the house, however, the poor girl has worn a face full of trouble; and, to use the housekeeper's words, "has fallen into a sad hystericky way lately." It seems that she was born and brought up in the village, where her father was parish-clerk, and she was an early playmate and sweetheart of young Jack Tibbets. Since she has come to live at the Hall, however, her head has been a little turned. Being very pretty, and naturally genteel, she has been much noticed and indulged; and being the housekeeper's niece, she has held an equivocal station between a servant and a companion. She has learnt something of fashions and notions among the young ladies, which have effected quite a metamorphosis; insomuch that her finery at church on Sundays has given mortal offence to her former intimates in the village. This has occasioned the misrepresentations which have awakened the implacable family pride of Dame Tibbets. But what is worse, Phœbe, having a spice of coquetry in her disposition, showed it on one or two occasions to her lover, which produced a downright quarrel; and Jack, being very proud and fiery, has absolutely turned his back upon her for several successive Sundays.

The poor girl is full of sorrow and repentance, and would fain make up with her lover; but he feels his security, and stands aloof. In this he is doubtless encouraged by his mother, who is continually reminding him of what he owes to his family; for this same family pride seems doomed to be the eternal bane of lovers.

As I hate to see a pretty face in trouble, I have felt quite concerned for the luckless Phœbe, ever since I heard her story. It is a sad thing to be thwarted in love at any time, but particularly so at this tender season of the year, when every living thing, even to the very butterfly, is sporting with its mate; and the green fields and the budding groves, and the singing of the birds, and the sweet smell of the flowers, are enough to turn the head of a love-sick girl. I

am told that the coolness of Young Ready-Money lies heavy at poor Phœbe's heart. Instead of singing about the house as formerly, she goes about pale and sighing, and is apt to break into tears when her companions are full of merriment.

Mrs. Hannah, the vestal gentlewoman of my Lady Lillycraft, has had long talks and walks with Phœbe, up and down the avenue, of an evening; and has endeavoured to squeeze some of her own verjuice into the other's milky nature. She speaks with contempt and abhorrence of the whole sex, and advises Phœbe to despise all the men as heartily as she does. But Phœbe's loving temper is not to be curdled; she has no such thing as hatred or contempt for mankind in her whole composition. She has all the simple fondness of heart of poor, weak, loving woman; and her only thoughts at present are, how to conciliate and reclaim her wayward swain.

The spells and love-charms, which are matters of sport to the other domestics, are serious concerns with this love-stricken damsel. She is continually trying her fortune in a variety of ways. I am told that she has absolutely fasted for six Wednesdays and three Fridays successively, having understood that it was a sovereign charm to ensure being married to one's liking within the year. She carries about, also, a lock of her sweetheart's hair, and a riband he once gave her, being a mode of producing constancy in her lover. She even went so far as to try her fortune by the moon, which has always had much to do with lovers' dreams and fancies. For this purpose she went out in the night of the full moon, knelt on a stone in the meadow, and repeated the old traditional rhyme:

“ All hail to thee, moon, all hail to thee:
I pray thee, good moon, now show to me
The youth who my future husband shall be.”

When she came back to the house, she was faint, and pale, and went immediately to bed. The next morning she told the porter's wife that she had seen some one close by the hedge in the meadow, which she was sure was young Tibbets; at any rate, she had dreamt of him all night; both of which, the old dame assured her, were most happy signs. It has since turned out that the person in the meadow was old Christy, the huntsman, who was walking his nightly rounds with the great stag-hound; so that Phœbe's faith in the charm is completely shaken.

THE LIBRARY.

YESTERDAY the fair Julia made her first appearance down stairs since her accident; and the sight of her spread an universal cheerfulness through the household. She was extremely pale, however, and could not walk without pain and difficulty. She was assisted, therefore, to a sofa in the library, which is pleasant and retired, looking out among trees; and so quiet that the little birds come hopping upon the windows, and peering curiously into the apartment. Here several of the family gathered round, and devised means to amuse her, and make the day pass pleasantly. Lady Lillycraft lamented the want of some new novel to while away the time; and was almost in a pet, because the "Author of Waverley" had not produced a work for the last three months.

There was a motion made to call on the parson for some of his old legends or ghost stories; but to this Lady Lillycraft objected, as they were apt to give her the vapours. General Harbottle gave a minute account, for the sixth time, of the disaster of a friend in India, who had his leg bitten off by a tiger, whilst he was hunting; and was proceeding to menace the company with a chapter or two about Tippoo Saib.

At length the captain bethought himself, and said he believed he had a manuscript tale lying in one corner of his campaigning trunk, which if he could find, and the company were desirous, he would read to them. The offer was eagerly accepted. He retired, and soon returned with a roll of blotted manuscript, in a very gentlemanlike, but nearly illegible, hand, and a great part written on cartridge paper.

"It is one of the scribblings," said he, "of my poor friend, Charles Lightly, of the Dragoons. He was a curious, romantic, studious, fanciful fellow; the favourite, and often the unconscious butt of his fellow-officers, who entertained themselves with his eccentricities. He was in some of the hardest service in the Peninsula, and distinguished himself by his gallantry. When the intervals of duty permitted, he was fond of roving about the country, visiting noted places, and was extremely fond of Moorish ruins. When at his quarters, he was a great scribbler, and passed much of his leisure with his pen in his hand.

"As I was a much younger officer, and a very young man, he took me, in a manner, under his care, and we became close friends. He used often to read his writings to me, having a great confidence in my taste, for I always praised them. Poor fellow! he was shot down close by me at Waterloo. We lay wounded together for some time, during a hard contest that took place near at hand. As I was least hurt, I tried to relieve him, and to stanch the blood which flowed from a wound in his breast. He lay with his head in my lap, and looked up thankfully in my face, but shook his head faintly, and made a sign that it was all over with him; and indeed he died a few minutes afterwards, just as our men had repulsed the enemy, and came to our relief. I have his favourite dog and his pistols to this day, and several of his manuscripts, which he gave to me at different times. The one I am now going to read is a tale which he said he wrote in Spain, during the time that he lay ill of a wound received at Salamanca."

We now arranged ourselves to hear the story. The captain seated himself on the sofa, beside the fair Julia, who I had noticed to be somewhat affected by the picture he had carelessly drawn of wounds and dangers in the field of battle. She now leaned her arm fondly on his shoulder, and her eye glistened as it rested on the manuscript of the poor literary dragoon. Lady Lillycraft buried herself in a deep, well-cushioned elbow-chair. Her dogs were nestled on soft mats at her feet; and the gallant general took his station, in an arm-chair, at her side, and toyed with her elegantly-ornamented work-bag. The rest of the circle being all equally well accommodated, the captain began his story, a copy of which I have procured for the benefit of the reader.

THE STUDENT OF SALAMANCA.

What a life doe I lead with my master; nothing but blowing of bellows, beating of spirits, and scraping of crosetts! It is a very secret science, for none almost can understand the language of it. Sublimation, almagination, calcination, rufification, albification, and fermentation; with as many termes impossible to be uttered as the arte to be compassed.

LILLY'S GALLATHEA.

ONCE upon a time, in the ancient city of Grenada, there sojourned a young man of the name of Antonio de Castros. He wore the garb of a student of Salamanca, and was pur-

suings a course of reading in the library of the university; and, at intervals of leisure, indulging his curiosity by examining those remains of Moorish magnificence for which Grenada is renowned.

Whilst occupied in his studies, he frequently noticed an old man of a singular appearance, who was likewise a visitor to the library. He was lean and withered, though apparently more from study than from age. His eyes, though bright and visionary, were sunk in the head, and thrown into shade by overhanging eyebrows. His dress was always the same: a black doublet, a short black coat, very rusty and threadbare, a small ruff, and a large overshadowing hat.

His appetite for knowledge seemed insatiable. He would pass whole days in the library, absorbed in study, consulting a multiplicity of authors, as though he were pursuing some interesting subject through all its ramifications; so that, in general, when evening came, he was almost buried among books and manuscripts.

The curiosity of Antonio was excited, and he inquired of the attendants concerning the stranger. No one could give him any information, excepting that he had been for some time past a casual frequenter of the library; that his reading lay chiefly among works treating of the occult sciences, and that he was particularly curious in his inquiries after Arabian manuscripts. They added, that he never held communication with any one, excepting to ask for particular works; that, after a fit of studious application, he would disappear for several days, and even weeks, and when he revisited the library he would look more withered and haggard than ever. The student felt interested by this account; he was leading rather a desultory life, and had all that capricious curiosity which springs up in idleness. He determined to make himself acquainted with this book-worm, and find out who and what he was.

The next time that he saw the old man at the library he commenced his approaches, by requesting permission to look at one of the volumes with which the unknown appeared to have done. The latter merely bowed his head in token of assent. After pretending to look through the volume with great attention, he returned it with many acknowledgments. The stranger made no reply.

"May I ask, señor," said Antonio, with some hesitation, "may I ask what you are searching after in all these books?"

The old man raised his head with an expression of surprise, at having his studies interrupted for the first time, and by so intrusive a question. He surveyed the student with a side glance from head to foot: "Wisdom, my son," said he, calmly; "and the search requires every moment of my attention." He then cast his eyes upon his book and resumed his studies.

"But, father," said Antonio, "cannot you spare a moment to point out the road to others? It is to experienced travellers, like you, that we strangers in the paths of knowledge must look for directions on our journey."

The stranger looked disturbed: "I have not time enough, my son, to learn," said he, "much less to teach. I am ignorant myself of the path of true knowledge; how then can I show it to others?"

"Well, but, father——"

"Señor," said the old man, mildly, but earnestly, "you must see that I have but few steps more to the grave. In that short space have I to accomplish the whole business of my existence. I have no time for words; every word is as one grain of sand of my glass wasted. Suffer me to be alone."

There was no replying to so complete a closing of the door of intimacy. The student found himself calmly, but totally repulsed. Though curious and inquisitive, yet he was naturally modest, and on after-thoughts he blushed at his own intrusion. His mind soon became occupied by other objects. He passed several days wandering among the mouldering piles of Moorish architecture, those melancholy monuments of an elegant and voluptuous people. He paced the deserted halls of the Alhambra, the paradise of the Moorish kings. He visited the great court of the lions, famous for the perfidious massacre of the gallant Abencerrages. He gazed with admiration at its mosaic cupolas, gorgeously painted in gold and azure; its basins of marble, its alabaster vase, supported by lions, and storied with inscriptions.

His imagination kindled as he wandered among these scenes. They were calculated to awaken all the enthusiasm of a youthful mind. Most of the halls have anciently been beautified by fountains. The fine taste of the Arabs delighted in the sparkling purity and reviving freshness of water, and they erected, as it were, altars on every side, to that delicate element. Poetry mingles with architecture in the Alhambra.

It breathes along the very walls. Wherever Antonio turned his eye, he beheld inscriptions in Arabic, wherein the perpetuity of Moorish power and splendour within these walls was confidently predicted. Alas! how has the prophecy been falsified! Many of the basins, where the fountains had once thrown up their sparkling showers, were dry and dusty. Some of the palaces were turned into gloomy convents, and the bare-foot monk paced through those courts, which had once glittered with the array, and echoed to the music of Moorish chivalry.

In the course of his rambles, the student more than once encountered the old man of the library. He was always alone, and so full of thought as not to notice any one about him. He appeared to be intent upon studying those half-buried inscriptions, which are found, here and there, among the Moorish ruins, and seem to murmur from the earth the tale of former greatness. The greater part of these have since been translated; but they were supposed by many, at the time, to contain symbolical revelations, and golden maxims of the Arabian sages and astrologers. As Antonio saw the stranger apparently decyphering these inscriptions, he felt an eager longing to make his acquaintance, and to participate in his curious researches; but the repulse he had met with at the library deterred him from making any further advances.

He had directed his steps one evening to the sacred mount, which overlooks the beautiful valley watered by the Darro, the fertile plain of the Vega, and all that rich diversity of vale and mountain, that surrounds Grenada with an earthly paradise. It was twilight when he found himself at the place, where, at the present day, are situated the chapels known by the name of the Sacred Furnaces. They are so called from grottoes, in which some of the primitive saints are said to have been burnt. At the time of Antonio's visit, the place was an object of much curiosity. In an excavation of these grottoes several manuscripts had recently been discovered, engraved on plates of lead. They were written in the Arabian language, excepting one, which was in unknown characters. The pope had issued a bull, forbidding any one, under pain of excommunication, to speak of these manuscripts. The prohibition had only excited the greater curiosity; and many reports were whispered about that these manuscripts contained treasures of dark and forbidden knowledge.

As Antonio was examining the place from whence these

mysterious manuscripts had been drawn, he again observed the old man of the library, wandering among the ruins. His curiosity was now fully awakened; the time and place served to stimulate it. He resolved to watch this groper after secret and forgotten lore, and to trace him to his habitation. There was something like adventure in the thing that charmed his romantic disposition. He followed the stranger, therefore, at a little distance; at first cautiously, but he soon observed him to be so wrapped in his own thoughts, as to take little heed of external objects.

They passed along by the skirts of the mountain, and then by the shady banks of the Darro. They pursued their way, for some distance from Grenada, along a lonely road that led among the hills. The gloom of evening was gathering, and it was quite dark when the stranger stopped at the portal of a solitary mansion.

It appeared to be a mere wing, or ruined fragment, of what had once been a pile of some consequence. The walls were of great thickness; the windows narrow, and generally secured by iron bars. The door was of planks, studded with iron spikes, and had been of great strength, though at present it was much decayed. At one end of the mansion was a ruinous tower, in the Moorish style of architecture. The edifice had probably been a country retreat, or castle of pleasure, during the occupation of Grenada by the Moors, and rendered sufficiently strong to withstand any casual assault in those warlike times.

The old man knocked at the portal. A light appeared at a small window just above it, and a female head looked out: it might have served as a model for one of Raphael's saints. The hair was beautifully braided, and gathered in a silken net; and the complexion, as well as could be judged from the light, was that soft, rich brunette, so becoming in southern beauty.

"It is I, my child," said the old man. The face instantly disappeared, and soon after a wicket-door in the large portal opened. Antonio, who had ventured near to the building, caught a transient sight of a delicate female form. A pair of fine, black eyes darted a look of surprise at seeing a stranger hovering near, and the door was precipitately closed.

There was something in this sudden gleam of beauty that wonderfully struck the imagination of the student. It was like a brilliant flashing from its dark casket. He sauntered about,

regarding the gloomy pile with increasing interest. A few simple, wild notes, from among some rocks and trees at a little distance, attracted his attention. He found there a group of Gitanas, a vagabond gipsy race, which at that time abounded in Spain, and lived in hovels and caves of the hills about the neighbourhood of Grenada. Some were busy about a fire, and others were listening to the uncouth music which one of their companions, seated on a ledge of the rock, was making with a split reed.

Antonio endeavoured to obtain some information of them concerning the old building and its inhabitants. The one who appeared to be their spokesman was a gaunt fellow, with a subtle gait, a whispering voice, and a sinister roll of the eye. He shrugged his shoulders on the student's inquiries, and said that all was not right in that building. An old man inhabited it, whom nobody knew, and whose family appeared to be only a daughter and a female servant! He and his companions, he added, lived up among the neighbouring hills; and as they had been about at night, they had often seen strange lights, and heard strange sounds from the tower. Some of the country people, who worked in the vineyards among the hills, believed the old man to be one that dealt in the black art, and were not over fond of passing near the tower at night; "but for our parts," said the Gitano, "we are not a people that trouble ourselves much with fears of that kind."

The student endeavoured to gain more precise information, but they had none to furnish him. They began to be solicitous for a compensation for what they had already imparted; and recollecting the loneliness of the place, and the vagabond character of his companions, he was glad to give them a gratuity, and hasten homewards.

He sat down to his studies, but his brain was too full of what he had seen and heard; his eye was upon the page, but his fancy still returned to the tower, and he was continually picturing the little window, with the beautiful head peeping out; or the door half open, and the nymph-like form within. He retired to bed, but the same objects haunted his dreams. He was young and susceptible; and the excited state of his feelings, from wandering among the abodes of departed grace and gallantry, had predisposed him for a sudden impression from female beauty.

The next morning he strolled again in the direction of the tower. It was still more forlorn by the broad glare of day

than in the gloom of evening. The walls were crumbling, and weeds and moss were growing in every crevice. It had the look of a prison rather than a dwelling-house. In one angle, however, he remarked a window which seemed an exception to the surrounding squalidness. There was a curtain drawn within it, and flowers standing on the window stone. Whilst he was looking at it the curtain was partially withdrawn, and a delicate white arm, of the most beautiful roundness, was put forth to water the flowers.

The student made a noise to attract the attention of the fair florist. He succeeded. The curtain was further drawn, and he had a glance of the same lovely face he had seen the evening before; it was but a mere glance; the curtain again fell, and the casement closed. All this was calculated to excite the feelings of a romantic youth. Had he seen the unknown under other circumstances, it is probable that he would not have been struck with her beauty; but this appearance of being shut up and kept apart gave her the value of a treasured gem. He passed and repassed before the house several times in the course of the day, but saw nothing more. He was there again in the evening. The whole aspect of the house was dreary. The narrow windows emitted no rays of cheerful light to indicate that there was social life within. Antonio listened at the portal, but no sound of voices reached his ear. Just then he heard the clapping to of a distant door, and fearing to be detected in the unworthy act of eaves-dropping, he precipitately drew off to the opposite side of the road, and stood in the shadow of a ruined archway.

He now remarked a light from a window in the tower. It was fitful and changeable; commonly feeble and yellowish, as if from a lamp; with an occasional glare of some vivid metallic colour followed by a dusky glow. A column of dense smoke would now and then rise in the air, and hang like a canopy over the tower. There was altogether such a loneliness and seeming mystery about the building and its inhabitants, that Antonio was half inclined to indulge the country people's notions, and to fancy it the den of some powerful sorcerer, and the fair damsel he had seen to be some spell-bound beauty.

After some time had elapsed, a light appeared in the window where he had seen the beautiful arm. The curtain was down, but it was so thin that he could perceive the shadow of some one passing and repassing between it and the light. He fancied that he could distinguish that the form was delicate;

and, from the alacrity of its movements, it was evidently youthful. He had not a doubt but this was the bed-chamber of his beautiful unknown.

Presently he heard the sound of a guitar, and a female voice singing. He drew near cautiously, and listened. It was a plaintive Moorish ballad, and he recognized in it the lamentations of one of the Abencerrages on leaving the walls of lovely Grenada. It was full of passion and tenderness. It spoke of the delights of early life; the hours of love it had enjoyed on the banks of the Darro, and among the blissful abodes of the Alhambra. It bewailed the fallen honours of the Abencerrages, and imprecated vengeance on their oppressors. Antonio was affected by the music. It singularly coincided with the place. It was like the voice of past times echoed in the present, and breathing among the monuments of its departed glories.

The voice ceased; after a time the light disappeared, and all was still. "She sleeps!" said Antonio, fondly. He lingered about the building with the devotion with which a lover lingers about the bower of sleeping beauty. The rising moon threw its silver beams on the grey walls, and glittered on the casement. The late gloomy landscape gradually became flooded with its radiance. Finding, therefore, that he could no longer move about in obscurity, and fearful that his loiterings might be observed, he reluctantly retired.

The curiosity which had at first drawn the young man to the tower was now seconded by feelings of a more romantic kind. His studies were almost entirely abandoned. He maintained a kind of blockade of the old mansion; he would take a book with him, and pass a great part of the day under the trees in its vicinity; keeping a vigilant eye upon it, and endeavouring to ascertain what were the walks of his mysterious charmer. He found, however, that she never went out except to mass, when she was accompanied by her father. He waited at the door of the church, and offered her the holy water, in the hopes of touching her hand—a little office of gallantry common in catholic countries. She, however, modestly declined, without raising her eyes to see who made the offer, and always took it herself from the font. She was attentive in her devotion; her eyes were never taken from the altar or the priest, and, on returning home, her countenance was almost entirely concealed by her mantilla.

Antonio had now carried on the pursuit for several days,

and was hourly getting more and more interested in the chase, but never a step nearer to the game. His lurkings about the house had probably been noticed, for he no longer saw the fair face at the window, nor the white arm put forth to water the flowers. His only consolation was to repair nightly to his post of observation and listen to her warbling, and if by chance he could catch a sight of her shadow, passing and repassing before the window, he thought himself most fortunate.

As he was indulging in one of these evening vigils, which were complete revels of the imagination, the sounds of approaching footsteps made him withdraw into the deep shadow of the ruined archway, opposite to the tower. A cavalier approached, wrapped in a large Spanish cloak. He paused under the window of the tower, and after a little while began a serenade, accompanied by his guitar, in the usual style of Spanish gallantry. His voice was rich and manly; he touched the instrument with skill, and sang with amorous and impassioned eloquence. The plume of his hat was buckled by jewels that sparkled in the moonbeams; and, as he played on the guitar, his cloak falling off from one shoulder, showed him to be richly dressed. It was evident that he was a person of rank.

The idea now flashed across Antonio's mind, that the affections of the unknown beauty might be engaged. She was young, and doubtless susceptible: and it was not in the nature of Spanish females to be deaf and insensible to music and admiration. The surmise brought with it a feeling of dreaminess. There was a pleasant dream of several days suddenly dispelled. He had never before experienced any thing of the tender passion; and, as its morning dreams are always delightful, he would fain have continued in the delusion.

"But what have I to do with her attachments?" thought he; "I have no claim on her heart, nor even on her acquaintance. How do I know that she is worthy of affection? Or, if she is, must not so gallant a lover as this, with his jewels, his rank, and the detestable music, have completely captivated her? What idle humour is this that I have fallen into? I must again to my books. Study, study will soon chase away all these idle fancies."

The more he thought, however, the more he became entangled in the spell which his lively imagination had woven round him; and now that a rival had appeared, in addition

to the other obstacles that environed this enchanted beauty, she appeared ten times more lovely and desirable. It was some slight consolation to him to perceive that the gallantry of the unknown met with no apparent return from the tower. The light at the window was extinguished. The curtain remained undrawn, and none of the customary signals were given to intimate that the serenade was accepted.

The cavalier lingered for some time about the place, and sang several other tender airs with a taste and feeling that made Antonio's heart ache; at length he slowly retired. The student remained with folded arms, leaning against the ruined arch, endeavouring to summon up resolution enough to depart; but there was a romantic fascination that still enchained him to the place. "It is the last time," said he, willing to compromise between his feelings and his judgment, "it is the last time; then let me enjoy the dream a few moments longer."

As his eye ranged about the old building to take a farewell look, he observed the strange light in the tower, which he had noticed on a former occasion. It kept beaming up and declining as before. A pillar of smoke rose in the air, and hung in sable volumes. It was evident the old man was busied in some of those operations that had gained him the reputation of a sorcerer throughout the neighbourhood.

Suddenly an intense and brilliant glare shone through the casement, followed by a loud report, and then a fierce and ruddy glow. A figure appeared at the window, uttering cries of agony or alarm, but immediately disappeared, and a body of smoke and flame whirled out of the narrow aperture. Antonio rushed to the portal, and knocked at it with vehemence. He was only answered by loud shrieks, and found that the females were already in helpless consternation. With an exertion of desperate strength he forced the wicket from its hinges, and rushed into the house.

He found himself in a small vaulted hall, and by the light of the moon which entered at the door, he saw a staircase to the left. He hurried up it to a narrow corridor, through which was rolling a volume of smoke. He found here the two females in a frantic state of alarm; one of them clasped her hands, and implored him to save her father.

The corridor terminated in a spiral flight of steps, leading up to the tower. He sprang up it to a small door, through the chinks of which came a glow of light, and smoke was

spuming out. He burst it open, and found himself in an antique vaulted chamber, furnished with furnace, and various chemical apparatus. A shattered retort lay on the stone floor; a quantity of combustibles, nearly consumed, with various half-burnt books and papers, were sending up an expiring flame, and filling the chamber with stifling smoke. Just within the chamber lay the reputed conjuror. He was bleeding, his clothes were scorched, and he appeared lifeless. Antonio caught him up, and bore him down the stairs to a chamber in which there was a light, and laid him on a bed. The female domestic was dispatched for such appliances as the house afforded; but the daughter threw herself frantically beside her parent, and could not be reasoned out of her alarm. Her dress was all in disorder; her dishevelled hair hung in rich confusion about her neck and bosom, and never was there beheld a lovelier picture of terror and affliction.

The skilful assiduities of the scholar soon produced signs of returning animation in his patient. The old man's wounds though severe, were not dangerous. They had evidently been produced by the bursting of the retort; in his bewilderment he had been enveloped in the stifling metallic vapours, which had overpowered his feeble frame, and had not Antonio arrived to his assistance, it is possible he might never have recovered.

By slow degrees he came to his senses. He looked about with a bewildered air at the chamber, the agitated group around, and the student who was leaning over him.

"Where am I?" said he, wildly.

At the sound of his voice his daughter uttered a faint exclamation of delight. "My poor Inez!" said he, embracing her; then putting his hand to his head, and taking it away stained with blood, he seemed suddenly to recollect himself, and to be overcome with emotion.

"Ay!" cried he, "all is over with me! all gone! all vanished! gone in a moment! the labour of a lifetime lost!"

His daughter attempted to soothe him, but he became slightly delirious, and raved incoherently about malignant demons, and about the habitation of the green lion being destroyed. His wounds being dressed, and such other remedies administered as his situation required, he sunk into a state of quiet. Antonio now turned his attention to the daughter, whose sufferings had been little inferior to those of her father. Having with great difficulty succeeded in tran-

quillizing her fears, he endeavoured to prevail upon her to retire, and to seek the repose so necessary to her frame, proffering to remain by her father until morning. "I am a stranger," said he, "it is true, and my offer may appear intrusive; but I see you are lonely and helpless, and I cannot help venturing over the limits of mere ceremony. Should you feel any scruple or doubt, however, say but a word, and I will instantly retire."

There was a frankness, a kindness, and a modesty mingled in Antonio's deportment, that inspired instant confidence; and his simple scholar's garb was a recommendation in the house of poverty. The females consented to resign the sufferer to his care, as they would be the better able to attend to him on the morrow. On retiring, the old domestic was profuse in her benedictions; the daughter only looked her thanks; but as they shone through the tears that filled her fine black eyes, the student thought them a thousand times the more eloquent.

Here, then, he was, by a singular turn of chance, completely housed within this mysterious mansion. When left to himself, and the bustle of the scene was over, his heart throbbed as he looked round the chamber in which he was sitting. It was the daughter's room, the promised land towards which he had cast so many a longing gaze. The furniture was old, and had probably belonged to the building in its prosperous days; but every thing was arranged with propriety. The flowers that he had seen her attend stood in the window; a guitar leaned against the table, on which stood a crucifix, and before it lay a missal and a rosary. There reigned an air of purity and serenity about this little nestling place of innocence; it was the emblem of a chaste and quiet mind. Some few articles of female dress lay on the chairs: and there was the very bed on which she had slept; the pillow on which her soft cheek had reclined! The poor scholar was treading enchanting ground; for what fairy land has more of magic in it than the bed-chamber of innocence and beauty?

From various expressions of the old man in his ravings, and from what he had noticed on a subsequent visit to the tower, to see that the fire was extinguished, Antonio had gathered that his patient was an alchymist. The philosopher's stone was an object eagerly sought after by visionaries in those days; but in consequence of the superstitious pre-

judices of the times, and the frequent persecutions of its votaries, they were apt to pursue their experiments in secret; in lonely houses, in caverns and ruins, or in the privacy of cloistered cells.

In the course of the night the old man had several fits of restlessness and delirium; he would call out upon Theophrastus, and Geber, and Albertus Magnus, and other sages of his art; and anon would murmur about fermentation and projection, until, towards daylight, he once more sunk into a salutary sleep. When the morning sun darted his rays into the casement, the fair Inez, attended by the female domestic, came blushing into the chamber. The student now took his leave, having himself need of repose, but obtained ready permission to return and inquire after the sufferer.

When he called again, he found the alchemist languid and in pain, but apparently suffering more in mind than in body. His delirium had left him, and he had been informed of the particulars of his deliverance, and of the subsequent attentions of the scholar. He could do little more than look his thanks, but Antonio did not require them; his own heart repaid him for all that he had done, and he almost rejoiced in the disaster that had gained him an entrance into this mysterious habitation. The alchemist was so helpless as to need much assistance; Antonio remained with him therefore the greater part of the day. He repeated his visit the next day, and the next. Every day his company seemed more pleasing to the invalid; and every day he felt his interest in the latter increasing. Perhaps the presence of the daughter might have been at the bottom of this solicitude.

He had frequent and long conversations with the alchemist. He found him, as men of his pursuits were apt to be, a mixture of enthusiasm and simplicity; of curious and extensive reading on points of little utility, with great inattention to the every-day occurrences of life, and profound ignorance of the world. He was deeply versed in singular and obscure branches of knowledge, and much given to visionary speculations. Antonio, whose mind was of a romantic cast, had himself given some attention to the occult sciences, and he entered upon these themes with an ardour that delighted the philosopher. Their conversation frequently turned upon astrology, divination, and the great secret. The old man would forget his aches and wounds, rise up like a specter in his bed, and kindle into eloquence on his favourite topic

When gently admonished of his situation, it would but prompt him to another sally of thought.

"Alas, my son!" he would say, "is not this very decrepitude and suffering another proof of the importance of those secrets with which we are surrounded? Why are we trammelled by disease, withered by old age, and our spirits quenched, as it were, within us, but because we have lost those secrets of life and youth which were known to our parents before their fall? To regain these have philosophers been ever since aspiring; but just as they are on the point of securing the precious secrets for ever, the brief period of life is at an end; they die; and with them all their wisdom and experience. 'Nothing,' as de Nuysment observes, 'nothing is wanting for man's perfection but a longer life, less crossed with sorrows and maladies, to the attaining of the full and perfect knowledge of things.'"

At length Antonio so far gained on the heart of his patient, as to draw from him the outlines of his story.

Felix de Vasquez, the alchymist, was a native of Castile, and of an ancient and honourable line. Early in life he had married a beautiful female, a descendant from one of the Moorish families. The marriage displeased his father, who considered the pure Spanish blood contaminated by this foreign mixture. It is true, the lady traced her descent from one of the Abencerrages, the most gallant of Moorish cavaliers, who had embraced the Christian faith on being exiled from the walls of Grenada. The injured pride of the father, however, was not to be appeased. He never saw his son afterwards; and on dying left him but a scanty portion of his estate; bequeathing the residue, in the piety and bitterness of his heart, to the erection of convents, and the performance of masses for souls in purgatory. Don Felix resided for a long time in the neighbourhood of Valladolid in a state of embarrassment and obscurity. He devoted himself to intense study, having, while at the university of Salamanca, imbibed a taste for the secret sciences. He was enthusiastic and speculative; he went on from one branch of knowledge to another, until he became zealous in the search after the grand Arcanum.

He had at first engaged in the pursuit with the hopes of raising himself from his present obscurity, and resuming the rank and dignity to which his birth entitled him; but, as usual, it ended in absorbing every thought, and becoming the

business of his existence. He was at length aroused from this mental abstraction by the calamities of his household. A malignant fever swept off his wife and all his children, excepting an infant daughter. These losses for a time overwhelmed and stupified him. His home had in a manner died away from around him, and he felt lonely and forlorn. When his spirit revived within him, he determined to abandon the scene of his humiliation and disaster; to bear away the child that was still left him, beyond the scene of contagion, and never to return to Castile until he should be enabled to reclaim the honours of his line.

He had ever since been wandering and unsettled in his abode. Sometimes the resident of populous cities, at other times of absolute solitudes. He had searched libraries, meditated on inscriptions, visited adepts of different countries, and sought to gather and concentrate the rays which had been thrown by various minds upon the secrets of alchymy. He had at one time travelled quite to Padua to search for the manuscripts of Pietro d'Abano, and to inspect an urn which had been dug up near Este, supposed to have been buried by Maximus Olybius, and to have contained the grand elixir.*

While at Padua he had met with an adept versed in Arabian lore, who talked of the invaluable manuscripts that must remain in the Spanish libraries, preserved from the spoils of the Moorish academies and universities; of the probability of meeting with precious unpublished writings of Geber, and Alfarabius, and Avicenna, the great physicians of the Arabian schools, who, it is well known, had treated much of alchymy; but above all, he spoke of the Arabian tablets of lead, which had recently been dug up in the neighbourhood of Grenada, and which, it was confidently believed among adepts, contained the lost secrets of the art.

* This urn was found in 1533. It contained a lesser one, in which was a burning lamp betwixt two small vials, the one of gold, the other of silver, both of them full of a very clear liquor. On the largest was an inscription, stating that Maximus Olybius shut up in this small vessel elements which he had prepared with great toil. There were many disquisitions among the learned on the subject. It was the most received opinion that this Maximus Olybius was an inhabitant of Padua; that he had discovered the great secret; and that these vessels contained liquor, one to transmute metals to gold, the other to silver. The peasants who found the urns, imagining this precious liquor to be common water, spilt every drop, so that the art of transmuting metals remains as much a secret as ever.

The indefatigable alchemist once more bent his steps for Spain, full of renovated hope. He had made his way to Grenada; he had wearied himself in the study of Arabic, in deciphering inscriptions, in rummaging libraries, and exploring every possible trace left by the Arabian sages.

In all his wanderings he had been accompanied by Inez; through the rough and the smooth, the pleasant and the adverse; never complaining, but rather seeking to soothe his cares by her innocent and playful caresses. Her instruction had been the employment and the delight of his hours of relaxation. She had grown up while they were wandering, and had scarcely ever known any home but by his side. He was family, friends, home, everything to her. He had carried her in his arms when they first began their way-faring; had nestled her, as an eagle does its young, among the rocky heights of the Sierra Morena; she had sported about him in childhood in the solitudes of the Bateucas; had followed him, as a lamb does the shepherd, over the rugged Pyrenees, and into the fair plains of Languedoc; and now she was grown up to support his feeble steps among the ruined abodes of her maternal ancestors.

His property had gradually wasted away in the course of his travels and his experiments. Still hope, the constant attendant of the alchemist, had led him on; ever on the point of reaping the reward of his labours, and ever disappointed. With the credulity that often attended his art, he attributed many of his disappointments to the machinations of the malignant spirits that beset the path of the alchemist, and torment him in his solitary labours. "It is their constant endeavour," he observed, "to close up every avenue to those sublime truths, which would enable man to rise above the abject state into which he has fallen, and to return to his original perfection." To the evil offices of these demons he attributed his late disaster. He had been on the very verge of the glorious discovery; never were the indications more completely auspicious; all was going on prosperously, when, at the critical moment which should have crowned his labours with success, and have placed him at the very summit of human power and felicity, the bursting of a retort had reduced his laboratory and himself to ruins.

"I must now," said he, "give up at the very threshold of success. My books and papers are burnt; my apparatus is broken. I am too old to bear up against these evils. The

ardour that once inspired me is gone; my poor frame is exhausted by study and watchfulness, and this last misfortune has hurried me towards the grave." He concluded in a tone of deep dejection. Antonio endeavoured to comfort and reassure him; but the poor alchymist had for once awakened to a consciousness of the worldly ills that were gathering around him, and had sunk into despondency. After a pause, and some thoughtfulness and perplexity of brow, Antonio ventured to make a proposal.

"I have long," said he, "been filled with a love for the secret sciences, but have felt too ignorant and diffident to give myself up to them. You have acquired experience; you have amassed the knowledge of a lifetime; it were a pity it should be thrown away. You say you are too old to renew the toils of the laboratory, suffer me to undertake them. Add your knowledge to my youth and activity, and what shall we not accomplish? As a probationary fee, and a fund on which to proceed, I will bring into the common stock a sum of gold, the residue of a legacy, which has enabled me to complete my education. A poor scholar cannot boast much; but I trust we shall soon put ourselves beyond the reach of want; and if we should fail, why, I must depend, like other scholars, upon my brains to carry me through the world."

The philosopher's spirits, however, were more depressed than the student had imagined. This last shock, following in the rear of so many disappointments, had almost destroyed the reaction of his mind. The fire of an enthusiast, however, is never so low but that it may be blown again into a flame. By degrees the old man was cheered and reanimated by the buoyancy and ardour of his sanguine companion. He at length agreed to accept the services of the student, and once more to renew his experiments. He objected, however, to using the student's gold, notwithstanding that his own was nearly exhausted; but this objection was soon overcome; the student insisted on making it a common stock and common cause;—and then how absurd was any delicacy about such a trifle, with men who looked forward to discovering the philosopher's stone!

While, therefore, the alchymist was slowly recovering, the student busied himself in getting the laboratory once more in order. It was strewn with the wrecks of retorts and alembics, with old crucibles, boxes, and phials of powders and tinctures, and half-burnt books and manuscripts.

As soon as the old man was sufficiently recovered, the studies and experiments were renewed. The student became a privileged and frequent visitor, and was indefatigable in his toils in the laboratory. The philosopher daily derived new zeal and spirits from the animation of his disciple. He was now enabled to prosecute the enterprize with continued exertion, having so active a coadjutor to divide the toil. While he was poring over the writings of Sandivogius, and Philalethes, and Dominus de Nuysment, and endeavouring to comprehend the symbolical language in which they have locked up their mysteries, Antonio would occupy himself among the retorts and crucibles, and keep the furnace in a perpetual glow.

With all his zeal, however, for the discovery of the golden art, the feelings of the student had not cooled as to the object that first drew him to this ruinous mansion. During the old man's illness, he had frequent opportunities of being near the daughter; and every day made him more sensible to her charms. There was a pure simplicity, and an almost passive gentleness in her manners; yet with all this was mingled something, whether mere maiden shyness, or a consciousness of high descent, or a dash of Castilian pride, or perhaps all united, that prevented undue familiarity, and made her difficult of approach. The danger of her father, and the measures to be taken for this relief, had at first overcome this coyness and reserve; but as he recovered, and her alarm subsided, she seemed to shrink from the familiarity she had indulged with the youthful stranger, and to become every day more shy and silent.

Antonio had read many books, but this was the first volume of womankind that he had ever studied. He had been captivated with the very title-page; but the farther he read the more he was delighted. She seemed formed to love; her soft black eye rolled languidly under its long silken lashes, and wherever it turned it would linger and repose; there was tenderness in every beam. To him alone she was reserved and distant. Now that the common cares of the sick room were at an end, he saw little more of her than before his admission to the house. Sometimes he met her on his way to and from the laboratory, and at such times there was ever a smile and a blush; but, after a simple salutation, she glided on and disappeared.

"'Tis plain," thought Antonio, "my presence is indifferent, if not irksome to her. She has noticed my admiration, is determined to discourage it; nothing but a feeling of grati-

tude prevents her treating me with marked distaste—and then has she not another lover, rich, gallant, splendid, musical? how can I suppose she would turn her eyes from so brilliant a cavalier, to a poor obscure student, raking among the cinders of her father's laboratory?"

Indeed, the idea of the amorous serenader continually haunted his mind. He felt convinced that he was a favoured lover; yet, if so, why did he not frequent the tower? Why did he not make his approaches by noon-day? There was mystery in this eavesdropping and musical courtship. Surely Inez could not be encouraging a secret intrigue! Oh, no! she was too artless, too pure, too ingenuous! But then Spanish females were so prone to love and intrigue; and music and moonlight were so seductive, and Inez had such a tender soul languishing in every look.—“Oh!” would the poor scholar exclaim, clasping his hands, “Oh that I could but once behold those loving eyes beaming on me with affection!”

It is incredible to those who have not experienced it, on what scanty aliment human life and human love may be supported. A dry crust, thrown now and then to a starving man, will give him a new lease of existence; and a faint smile, or a kind look, bestowed at casual intervals, will keep a lover loving on, when a man in his sober senses would despair.

When Antonio found himself alone in the laboratory, his mind would be haunted by one of these looks, or smiles, which he had received in passing. He would set it in every possible light, and argue on it with all the self-pleasing, self-teasing, logic of a lover.

The country around him was enough to awaken that voluptuousness of feeling so favourable to the growth of passion. The window of the tower rose above the trees of the romantic valley of the Darro, and looked down upon some of the loveliest scenery of the Vega, where groves of citron and orange were refreshed by cool springs and brooks of the purest water. The Xenel and the Darro wound their shining streams along the plain, and gleamed from among its bowers. The surrounding hills were covered with vineyards, and the mountains, crowned with snow, seemed to melt into the blue sky. The delicate airs that played about the towers were perfumed by the fragrance of myrtle and orange blossoms, and the ear was charmed with the fond warbling of the nightingale, which, in these happy regions, sings the whole day long. Sometimes, too, there was the idle song of the muleteer, saun-

tering along the solitary road; or the notes of the guitar from some group of peasants dancing in the shade. All these were enough to fill the head of a young lover with poetic fancies; and Antonio would picture to himself how he could loiter among those happy groves and wander by those gentle rivers, and love away his life with Inez.

He felt at times impatient at his own weakness, and would endeavour to brush away these cobwebs of the mind. He would turn his thought, with sudden effort, to his occult studies, or occupy himself in some perplexing process; but often, when he had partially succeeded in fixing his attention, the sound of Inez' lute, or the soft notes of her voice, would come stealing upon the stillness of the chamber, and, as it were, floating round the tower. There was no great art in her performance; but Antonio thought he had never heard music comparable to this. It was perfect witchcraft to hear her warble forth some of her national melodies; those little Spanish romances and Moorish ballads that transport the hearer, in idea, to the banks of the Guadalquivir, or the walls of the Alhambra, and make him dream of beauties, and balconies, and moonlight serenades.

Never was poor student more sadly beset than Antonio. Love is a troublesome companion in a study at the best of times; but in the laboratory of an alchemist his intrusion is terribly disastrous. Instead of attending to the retorts and crucibles, and watching the process of some experiment intrusted to his charge, the student would get entranced in one of these love-dreams, from which he would often be aroused by some fatal catastrophe. The philosopher, on returning from his researches in the libraries, would find every thing gone wrong, and Antonio in despair over the ruins of the whole day's work. The old man, however, took all quietly, for his had been a life of experiment and failure.

"We must have patience, my son," would he say, "as all the great masters that have gone before us have had. Errors and accidents, and delays, are what we have to contend with. Did not Pontanus err two hundred times before he could obtain even the matter on which to found his experiments? The great Flamel, too, did he not labour four-and-twenty years, before he ascertained the first agent? What difficulties and hardships did not Cartilaceus encounter, at the very threshold of his discoveries? And Bernard de Treves, even after he had attained a knowledge of all the requisites, was ha

not delayed full three years? What you consider accidents, my son, are the machinations of our invisible enemies. The treasures and golden secrets of nature are surrounded by spirits hostile to man. The air about us teems with them. They lurk in the fire of the furnace, in the bottom of the crucible and the alembic, and are ever on the alert to take advantage of those moments when our minds are wandering from intense meditation on the great truth that we are seeking. We must only strive the more to purify ourselves from those gross and earthly feelings which becloud the soul, and prevent her from piercing into nature's arcana."

"Alas!" thought Antonio, "if to be purified from all earthly feeling requires that I should cease to love Inez, I fear I shall never discover the philosopher's stone!"

In this way matters went on for some time at the alchemist's. Day after day was sending the student's gold in vapour up the chimney; every blast of the furnace made him a ducat the poorer, without apparently helping him a jot nearer to the golden secret. Still the young man stood by, and saw piece after piece disappearing without a murmur: he had daily an opportunity of seeing Inez, and felt as if her favour would be better than silver or gold, and that every smile was worth a ducat.

Sometimes, in the cool of the evening, when the toils of the laboratory happened to be suspended, he would walk with the alchemist in what had once been a garden belonging to the mansion. There were still the remains of terraces and balustrades, and here and there a marble urn, or mutilated statue overturned, and buried, among weeds and flowers run wild. It was the favourite resort of the alchemist in his hours of relaxation, where he would give full scope to his visionary flights. His mind was tinged with the Rosicrucian doctrines. He believed in elementary beings; some favourable, others adverse to his pursuits; and in the exultation of his fancy, had often imagined that he held communion with them in his solitary walks about the whispering groves and echoing walls of this old garden.

When accompanied by Antonio, he would prolong these evening recreations. Indeed, he sometimes did it out of consideration for his disciple, for he feared lest his too close application, and his incessant seclusion in the tower, should be injurious to his health. He was delighted and surprised by this extraordinary zeal and perseverance in so young a

tyro, and looked upon him as destined to be one of the great luminaries of the art. Lest the student should repine at the time lost in these relaxations, the good alchemist would fill them up with wholesome knowledge, in matters connected with their pursuits; and would walk up and down the alleys with his disciple, imparting oral instruction, like an ancient philosopher. In all his visionary schemes there breathed a spirit of lofty, though chimerical, philanthropy, that won the admiration of the scholar. Nothing sordid, nor sensual; nothing petty, nor selfish, seemed to enter into his views, in respect to the grand discoveries he was anticipating. On the contrary, his imagination kindled with conceptions of widely dispensed happiness. He looked forward to the time when he should be able to go about the earth relieving the indigent, comforting the distressed; and, by his unlimited means, devising and executing plans for the complete extirpation of poverty, and all its attendant suffering and crimes. Never were grander schemes for general good, for the distribution of boundless wealth and universal competence, devised, than by this poor indigent alchemist in his ruined tower.

Antonio would attend these peripatetic lectures with all the ardour of a devotee; but there was another circumstance which may have given a secret charm to them. The garden was the resort also of Inez, where she took her walks of recreation; the only exercise that her secluded life permitted. As Antonio was duteously pacing by the side of his instructor, he would often catch a glimpse of the daughter, walking pensively about the valleys in the soft twilight. Sometimes they would meet her unexpectedly, and the heart of the student would throb with agitation. A blush, too, would crimson the cheek of Inez, but still she passed on, and never joined them.

He had remained one evening, until rather a late hour, with the alchemist in this favourite resort. It was a delightful night, after a sultry day, and the balmy air of the garden was peculiarly reviving. The old man was seated on a fragment of a pedestal, looking like a part of the ruin on which he sat. He was edifying his pupil by long lessons of wisdom from the stars, as they shone out with brilliant lustre in the dark blue vault of a southern sky; for he was deeply versed in Behmen, and other of the Rosicrucians, and talked much of the signature of earthly things, and passing events, which may be discerned in the heavens; of the power of the stars over corporeal beings, and their influence on the fortunes of the sons of men.

By degrees the moon rose, and shed her gleaming light among the groves. Antonio apparently listened with fixed attention to the sage, but his ear was drinking in the melody of Inez' voice, who was singing to her lute in one of the moonlight glades of the garden. The old man having exhausted his theme, sat gazing in silent reverie at the heavens. Antonio could not resist an inclination to steal a look at this coy beauty, who was thus playing the part of the nightingale, so sequestered and musical. Leaving the alchemist in his celestial reverie, he stole gently along one of the valleys. The music had ceased, and he thought he heard the sound of voices. He came to an angle of a copse that had screened a kind of green recess, ornamented by a marble fountain. The moon shone full upon the place, and by its light he beheld his unknown serenading rival at the feet of Inez. He was detaining her by the hand, which he covered with kisses; but at sight of Antonio he started up and half drew his sword, while Inez, disenchanted, fled back to the house.

All the jealous doubts and fears of Antonio were now confirmed. He did not remain to encounter the resentment of his happy rival at being thus interrupted, but turned from the place in sudden wretchedness of heart. That Inez should love another would have been misery enough; but that she should be capable of a dishonourable amour shocked him to the soul. The idea of deception in so young and apparently artless a being, brought with it that sudden distrust in human nature, so sickening to a youthful and ingenuous mind; but when he thought of the kind, simple parent she was deceiving, whose affections all centred in her, he felt for a moment a sentiment of indignation, and almost of aversion.

He found the alchemist still seated in his visionary contemplation of the moon. "Come hither, my son," said he, with his usual enthusiasm, "come, read with me in this vast volume of wisdom, thus nightly unfolded for our perusal. Wisely did the Chaldean sages affirm that the heaven is as a mystic page, uttering speech to those who can rightly understand; warning them of good and evil, and instructing them in the secret decrees of fate."

The student's heart ached for his venerable master; and, for a moment, he felt the futility of all his occult wisdom. "Alas! poor old man!" thought he, "what avails all thy study? Little dost thou dream, while busied in airy speculations among the stars, what a treason against thy happiness

is going on under thine eyes; as it were, in thy very bosom! —Oh, Inez! Inez! where shall we look for truth and innocence? where shall we repose confidence in women, if even you can deceive?"

It was a trite apostrophe, such as every lover makes when he finds his mistress not quite such a goddess as he had painted her. With the student, however, it sprang from honest anguish of heart. He returned to his lodgings in pitiable confusion of mind. He now deplored the infatuation that had led him on until his feelings were so thoroughly engaged. He resolved to abandon his pursuits at the tower, and trust to absence to dispel the fascination by which he had been spell-bound. He no longer thirsted after the discovery of the grand elixir; the dream of alchymy was over; for without Inez, what was the value of the philosopher's stone?

He rose, after a sleepless night, with the determination of taking his leave of the alchemist, and tearing himself from Grenada. For several days did he rise with the same resolution, and every night saw him come back to his pillow to repine at his want of resolution, and to make fresh determinations for the morrow. In the meanwhile he saw less of Inez than ever. She no longer walked in the garden, but remained almost entirely in her apartment. When she met him, she blushed more than usual; and once hesitated, as if she would have spoken; but after a temporary embarrassment, and still deeper blushes, she made some casual observation and retired. Antonio read in this confusion, a consciousness of fault, and of that fault's being discovered. "What could she have wished to communicate? Perhaps to account for the scene in the garden;—but how can she account for it, or why should she account for it to me? What am I to her?—or rather what is she to me?" exclaimed he, impatiently, with a new resolution to break through these entanglements of the heart, and fly from this enchanted spot for ever.

He was returning that very night to his lodgings, full of this excellent determination, when, in a shadowy part of the road, he passed a person whom he recognized, by his height and form, for his rival: he was going in the direction of the tower. If any lingering doubts remained, here was an opportunity of settling them completely. He determined to follow this unknown cavalier, and, under favour of the darkness, observe his movements. If he obtained access to the tower, or in any way a favourable reception, Antonio felt as if it

would be a relief to his mind, and would enable him to fix his wavering resolution.

The unknown, as he came near the tower, was more cautious and stealthy in his approaches. He was joined under a clump of trees by another person, and they had much whispering together. A light was burning in the chamber of Inez, the curtain was down, but the casement was left open, as the night was warm. After some time, the light was extinguished. A considerable interval elapsed. The cavalier and his companion remained under cover of the trees, as if keeping watch. At length they approached the tower with silent and cautious steps. The cavalier received a dark lantern from his companion, and threw off his cloak. The other then softly brought something from the clump of trees, which Antonio perceived to be a light ladder: he placed it against the wall, and the serenader gently ascended. A sickening sensation came over Antonio. Here was indeed a confirmation of every fear. He was about to leave the place, never to return, when he heard a stifled shriek from Inez' chamber.

In an instant the fellow that stood at the foot of the ladder lay prostrate on the ground. Antonio wrested a stiletto from his nerveless hand, and hurried up the ladder. He sprang in at the window, and found Inez struggling in the grasp of his fancied rival: the latter, disturbed from his prey, caught up his lantern, turned its light full upon Antonio, and drawing his sword, made a furious assault; luckily the student saw the light gleam along the blade, and parried the thrust with the stiletto. A fierce, but unequal combat ensued. Antonio fought exposed to the full glare of the light, while his antagonist was in shadow: his stiletto, too, was but a poor defence against a rapier. He saw that nothing could save him, but closing with his adversary and getting within his weapon: he rushed furiously upon him, and gave him a severe blow with the stiletto; but received a wound in return from the shortened sword. At the same moment a blow was inflicted from behind by the confederate, who had ascended the ladder; it felled him to the floor, and his antagonists made their escape.

By this time the cries of Inez had brought her father and the domestic to the room. Antonio was found weltering in his blood and senseless. He was conveyed to the chamber of the alchymist, who now repaid in kind the attentions which the student had once bestowed upon him. Among his varied

knowledge he possessed some skill in surgery, which at this moment was of more value than even his chemical lore. He stanchcd and dressed the wounds of his disciple, which on examination proved less desperate than he had at first apprehended. For a few days, however, his case was anxious, and attended with danger. The old man watched over him with the affection of a parent. He felt a double debt of gratitude towards him on account of his daughter and himself; he loved him, too, as a faithful and zealous disciple, and he dreaded lest the world should be deprived of the promising talents of so aspiring an alchymist.

An excellent constitution soon medicined his wounds; and there was a balsam in the looks and words of Inez, that had a healing effect on still severer wounds which he carried in his heart. She displayed the strongest interest in his safety; she called him her deliverer, her preserver. It seemed as if her grateful disposition sought, in the warmth of its acknowledgements, to repay him for past coldness. But what most contributed to Antonio's recovery, was her explanation concerning his supposed rival. It was some time since he had first beheld her at church, and he had ever since persecuted her with his attentions. He had beset her in her walks, until she had been obliged to confine herself to the house, except when accompanied by her father. He had besieged her with letters, serenades, and every art by which he could urge a vehement, but clandestine and dishonourable suit. The scene in the garden was as much of a surprise to her as to Antonio. Her persecutor had been attracted by her voice, and had found his way over a ruined part of the wall. He had come upon her unawares; was detaining her by force and pleading his insulting passion, when the appearance of the student interrupted him, and enabled her to make her escape. She had forborne to mention to her father the persecution which she suffered; she wished to spare him unavailing anxiety and distress, and had determined to confine herself more rigorously to the house; though it appeared that even here she had not been safe from his daring enterprise.

Antonio inquired whether she knew the name of this impetuous admirer? She replied, that he had made his advances under a fictitious name; but that she had heard him once called by the name of Don Ambrosio de Loxa.

Antonio knew him, by report, for one of the most determined and dangerous libertines in all Grenada. Artful,

accomplished, and, if he chose to be so, insinuating; but daring and headlong in the pursuit of his pleasures; violent and implacable in his resentments. He rejoiced to find that Inez had been proof against his seductions, and had been inspired with aversion by his splendid profligacy; but he trembled to think of the danger she had run, and he felt solicitude about the dangers that must yet environ her.

At present, however, it was probable the enemy had a temporary quietus. The traces of blood had been found for some distance from the ladder, until they were lost among thickets; and as nothing had been heard or seen of him since, it was concluded that he had been seriously wounded.

As the student recovered from his wounds, he was enabled to join Inez and her father in their domestic intercourse. The chamber in which they usually met had probably been a saloon of state in former times. The floor was of marble; the walls partially covered with the remains of tapestry; the chairs, richly carved and gilt, were crazed with age, and covered with tarnished and tattered brocade. Against the wall hung a long rusty rapier, the only relique that the old man retained of the chivalry of his ancestors. There might have been something to provoke a smile in the contrast between the mansion and its inhabitants; between present poverty and the traces of departed grandeur; but the fancy of the student had thrown so much romance about the edifice and its inmates, that every thing was clothed with charms. The philosopher, with his broken-down pride, and his strange pursuits, seemed to comport with the melancholy ruin he inhabited; and there was a native elegance of spirit about the daughter, that showed she would have graced the mansion in its happier days.

What delicious moments were these to the student! Inez was no longer coy and reserved. She was naturally artless and confiding; though the kind of persecution she had experienced from one admirer had rendered her, for a time, suspicious and circumspect towards the other. She now felt an entire confidence in the sincerity and worth of Antonio, mingled with an overflowing gratitude. When her eyes met his, they beamed with sympathy and kindness; and Antonio, no longer haunted by the idea of a favoured rival, once more aspired to success.

At these domestic meetings, however, he had little opportunity of paying his court except by looks. The alchemist,

supposing him, like himself, absorbed in the study of alchymy, endeavoured to cheer the tediousness of his recovery by long conversations on the art. He even brought several of his half-burnt volumes, which the student had once rescued from the flames, and rewarded him for their preservation by reading copious passages. He would entertain him with the great and good acts of Flamel, which he effected through the means of the philosopher's stone, relieving widows and orphans, founding hospitals, building churches, and what not; or with the interrogatories of King Kalid, and the answers of Morienus, the Roman hermit of Hierusalem; or the profound questions which Elardus, a necromancer of the province of Catalonia, put to the devil, touching the secrets of alchymy, and the devil's replies.

All these were couched in occult language, almost unintelligible to the unpractised ear of the disciple. Indeed, the old man delighted in the mystic phrases and symbolical jargon in which the writers that have treated of alchymy have wrapped their communications; rendering them incomprehensible except to the initiated. With what rapture would he elevate his voice at a triumphant passage, announcing the grand discovery! "Thou shalt see," would he exclaim, in the words of Henry Kuhnrade,* "the stone of the philosophers (our king) go forth of the bed-chamber of his glassy sepulchre in the theatre of this world; that is to say, regenerated and made perfect, a shining carbuncle, a most temperate splendour, whose most subtle and depurated parts are inseparable, united into one with a concordial mixture, exceeding equal, transparent as chrystal, shining red like a ruby, permanently colouring or ringing, fixt in all temptations or trials; yea, in the examination of the burning sulphur itself, and the devouring waters, and in the most vehement persecution of the fire, always incombustible and permanent as a salamander!"

The student had a high veneration for the fathers of alchymy, and a profound respect for his instructor; but what was Henry Kuhnrade, Geber, Lully, or even Albertus Magnus himself, compared to the countenance of Inez, which presented such a page of beauty to his perusal? While, therefore, the good alchemist was doling out knowledge by the hour, his disciple would forget books, alchymy, every thing but the lovely object before him. Inez, too, unpractised in the science of the heart, was gradual^{*} becoming

* Amphitheatre of the Eternal Wisdom.

fascinated by the silent attentions of her lover. Day by day she seemed more and more perplexed by the kindling and strangely pleasing emotions of her bosom. Her eye was often cast down in thought. Blushes stole to her cheek without any apparent cause, and light, half-suppressed sighs would follow these short fits of musing. Her little ballads, though the same that she had always sung, yet breathed a more tender spirit. Either the tones of her voice were more soft and touching, or some passages were delivered with a feeling which she had never before given them. Antonio, besides his love for the abstruse sciences, had a pretty turn for music; and never did philosopher touch the guitar more tastefully. As, by degrees, he conquered the mutual embarrassment that kept them asunder, he ventured to accompany Inez in some of her songs. He had a voice full of fire and tenderness: as he sang, one would have thought, from the kindly blushes of his companion, that he had been pleading his own passion in her ear. Let those who would keep two youthful hearts asunder, beware of music. Oh, this leaning over chairs, and conning the same music-book, and entwining the voices, and melting away in harmonies!—the German waltz is nothing to it.

The worthy alchymist saw nothing of all this. His mind could admit of no idea that was not connected with the discovery of the grand arcanum, and he supposed his youthful coadjutor equally devoted. He was a mere child as to human nature; and, as to the passion of love, whatever he might once have felt of it, he had long since forgotten that there was such an idle passion in existence. But, while he dreamed, the silent amour went on. The very quiet and seclusion of the place were favourable to the growth of romantic passion. The opening bud of love was able to put forth leaf by leaf, without an adverse wind to check its growth. There was neither officious friendship to chill by its advice, nor insidious envy to wither by its sneers, nor an observing world to look on and stare it out of countenance. There was neither declaration, nor vow, nor any other form of Cupid's canting school. Their hearts mingled together, and understood each other without the aid of language. They lapsed into the full current of affection, unconscious of its depth, and thoughtless of the rocks that might lurk beneath its surface. Happy lovers! who wanted nothing to make their felicity complete, but the discovery of the philosopher's stone!

At length Antonio's health was sufficiently restored to enable him to return to his lodgings in Grenada. He felt uneasy, however, at leaving the tower, while lurking danger might surround its almost defenceless inmates. He dreaded lest Don Ambrosio, recovered from his wounds, might plot some new attempt, by secret art or open violence. From all that he had heard, he knew him to be too implacable to suffer his defeat to pass unavenged, and too rash and fearless, when his arts were unavailing, to stop at any daring deed in the accomplishment of his purposes. He urged his apprehensions to the alchemist and his daughter, and proposed that they should abandon the dangerous vicinity of Grenada.

"I have relations," said he, "in Valentia, poor indeed, but worthy and affectionate. Among them you will find friendship and quiet, and we may there pursue our labours unmolested." He went on to paint the beauties and delights of Valentia with all the fondness of a native, and all the eloquence with which a lover paints the fields and groves which he is picturing as the future scenes of his happiness. His eloquence, backed by the apprehensions of Inez, was successful with the alchemist, who, indeed, had led too unsettled a life to be particular about the place of his residence; and it was determined, that, as soon as Antonio's health was perfectly restored, they should abandon the tower, and seek the delicious neighbourhood of Valentia.*

To recruit his strength, the student suspended his toils in the laboratory, and spent the few remaining days, before departure, in taking a farewell look at the enchanting environs of Grenada. He felt returning health and vigour as he inhaled the pure, temperate breezes that play about its hills; and the happy state of his mind contributed to his rapid recovery. Inez was often the companion of his walks. Her descent, by the mother's side, from one of the ancient Moorish

* Here are the strongest silks, the sweetest wines, the excellent'st almonds, the best oyls and beautifull'st females of all Spain. The very bruit animals make themselves beds of rosemary, and other fragrant flowers hereabouts; and when one is at sea, if the winde blow from the shore, he may smell this soyl before he comes in sight of it many leagues off, by the strong odoriferous scent it casts. As it is the most pleasant, so it is also the temperat'st clime of all Spain, and they commonly call it the second Italy, which made the Moors, whereof many thousands were disterr'd, and banish'd hence to Barbary, to think that Paradise was in that part of the heavens which hung over this citie.

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families, gave her an interest in this once favourite seat of Arabian power. She gazed with enthusiasm upon its magnificent monuments, and her memory was filled with the traditional tales and ballads of Moorish chivalry. Indeed the solitary life she had led, and the visionary turn of her father's mind, had produced an effect upon her character, and given it a tinge of what, in modern days, would be termed romance. All this was called into full force by this new passion; for, when a woman first begins to love, life is all romance to her.

In one of their evening strolls, they had ascended to the mountain of the Sun, where is situated the Generaliffe, the palace of pleasure in the days of Moorish dominion, but now a gloomy convent of capuchins. They had wandered about its garden, among groves of orange, citron, and cypress, where the waters, leaping in torrents, or gushing in fountains, or tossed aloft in sparkling jets, fill the air with music and freshness. There is a melancholy mingled with all the beauties of this garden, that gradually stole over the feelings of the lovers. The place is full of the sad story of past times. It was the favourite abode of the lovely queen of Grenada, where she was surrounded by the delights of a gay and voluptuous court. It was here, too, amidst her own bowers of roses, that her slanderers laid the base story of her dishonour, and struck a fatal blow to the line of the gallant Abencerrages.

The whole garden has a look of ruin and neglect. Many of the fountains are dry and broken; the streams have wandered from their marble channels, and are choked with weeds and yellow leaves. The reed whistles to the wind where it had once sported among roses, and shaken perfume from the orange blossom. The convent bell flings its sullen sound, or the drowsy vesper hymn floats along these solitudes, which once resounded with the song, and the dance, and the lover's serenade. Well may the Moors lament over the loss of this earthly paradise! well may they remember it in their prayers, and beseech heaven to restore it to the faithful; well may their ambassadors smite their breast when they behold these monuments of their race, and sit down and weep among the fading glories of Grenada!

It is impossible to wander about these scenes of departed love and gaiety, and not feel the tenderness of the heart awakened. It was then that Antonio first ventured to breathe his passion, and to express by words what his eyes

had long since so eloquently revealed. He made his avowal with fervour, but with frankness. He had no gay prospects to hold out; he was a poor scholar, dependent on his "good spirits to feed and clothe him." But a woman in love is no interested calculator. Inez listened to him with downcast eyes, but in them was a humid gleam that showed her heart was with him. She had no prudery in her nature; and she had not been sufficiently in society to acquire it. She loved him with all the absence of worldliness of a genuine woman; and amidst timid smiles and blushes, he drew from her a modest acknowledgment of her affection.

They wandered about the garden with that sweet intoxication of the soul which none but happy lovers know. The world about them was all fairy land; and, indeed, it spread forth one of its fairy scenes before their eyes, as if to fulfil their dreams of earthly happiness. They looked out from between groves of orange upon the towers of Grenada below them; the magnificent plain of the Vega beyond, streaked with evening sunshine, and the distant hills tinted with rosy and purple hues; it seemed an emblem of the happy future that love and hope was decking out for them.

As if to make the scene complete, a group of Andalusians struck up a dance, in one of the vistas of the garden, to the guitars of two wandering musicians. The Spanish music is wild and plaintive, yet the people dance to it with spirit and enthusiasm. The picturesque figures of the dancers; the girls with their hair in silken nets, that hung in notes and tassels down their backs, their mantillas floating round their graceful forms, their slender feet peeping from under their basquinas, their arms tossed up in the air to play the castanets, had a beautiful effect on this airy height, with the rich evening landscape spreading out below them.

When the dance was ended, two of the parties approached Antonio and Inez; one of them began a soft and tender Moorish ballad, accompanied by the other on the lute. It alluded to the story of the garden, the wrongs of the fair queen of Grenada, and the misfortunes of the Abencerrages. It was one of those old ballads that abound in this part of Spain, and live, like echoes, about the ruins of Moorish greatness. The heart of Inez was at that moment open to every tender impression; the tears rose into her eyes, as she listened to the tale. The singer approached nearer to her; she was striking in her appearance; young, beautiful, with

Mixture of wildness and melancholy in her fine black eyes. She fixed them mournfully and expressively on Inez, and suddenly varying her manner, sang another ballad, which treated of impending danger and treachery. All this might have passed for a mere accidental caprice of the singer, had there not been something in her look, manner, and gesticulation, that made it pointed and startling.

Inez was about to ask the meaning of this evidently personal application of the song, when she was interrupted by Antonio, who gently drew her from the place. Whilst she had been lost in attention to the music, he had remarked a group of men in the shadows of the trees, whispering together. They were enveloped in the broad hats and great cloaks so much worn by the Spaniards, and while they were regarding himself and Inez attentively, seemed anxious to avoid observation. Not knowing what might be their character or intention, he hastened to quit a place where the gathering shadows of evening might expose them to intrusion and insult. On their way down the hill, as they passed through the woods of elms, mingled with poplars and oleanders, that skirt the road leading from the Alhambra, he again saw these men, apparently following at a distance; and he afterwards caught sight of them among the trees on the banks of the Darro. He said nothing on the subject to Inez, nor her father, for he would not awaken unnecessary alarm; but he felt at a loss how to ascertain or avert any machinations that might be devising against the helpless inhabitants of the tower.

He took his leave of them late at night, full of this perplexity. As he left the dreary old pile, he saw some one lurking in the shadow of the wall, apparently watching his movements. He hastened after the figure, but it glided away, and disappeared among some ruins. Shortly after he heard a low whistle, which was answered from a little distance. He had no longer a doubt but that some mischief was on foot, and turned to hasten back to the tower, and put its inmates on their guard. He had scarcely turned, however, before he found himself suddenly seized from behind, by some one of Herculean strength. His struggles were in vain; he was surrounded by armed men. One threw a mantle over him that stifled his cries, and enveloped him in its folds; and he was hurried off with irresistible rapidity.

The next day passed without the appearance of Antonio at the alchymist's. Another, and another day succeeded, and

yet he did not come; nor had any thing been heard of him at his lodgings. His absence caused, at first, surprise and conjecture, and at length alarm. Inez recollected the singular intimations of the ballad-singer upon the mountain, which seemed to warn her of impending danger, and her mind was full of vague forebodings. She sat listening to every sound at the gate, or footstep on the stairs. She would take up her guitar, and strike a few notes, but it would not do; her heart was sickening with suspense and anxiety. She had never before felt what it was to be really lonely. She now was conscious of the force of that attachment which had taken possession of her breast; for never do we know how much we love, never do we know how necessary the object of our love is to our happiness, until we experience the weary void of separation.

The philosopher, too, felt the absence of his disciple almost as sensibly as did his daughter. The animating buoyancy of the youth had inspired him with new ardour, and had given to his labours the charm of full companionship. However, he had resources and consolations of which his daughter was destitute. His pursuits were of a nature to occupy every thought, and keep the spirits in a state of continual excitement. Certain indications, too, had lately manifested themselves, of the most favourable nature. Forty days and forty nights had the process gone on successfully; the old man's hopes were constantly rising, and he now considered the glorious moment once more at hand, when he should obtain not merely the major lunaria, but likewise the *tinctura solaris*, the means of multiplying gold, and of prolonging existence. He remained, therefore, continually shut up in his laboratory, watching his furnace; for a moment's inadvertency might once more defeat all his expectations.

He was sitting one evening at one of his solitary vigils, wrapped up in meditation; the hour was late, and his neighbour, the owl, was hooting from the battlement of the tower, when he heard the door open behind him. Supposing it to be his daughter coming to take her leave of him for the night, as was her frequent practice, he called her by name, but a harsh voice met his ear in reply. He was grasped by the arms, and looking up, perceived three strange men in the chamber. He attempted to shake them off, but in vain. He called for help, but they scoffed at his cries.

"Peace, dotard!" cried one, "think'st thou the servants of

the most holy inquisition are to be daunted by thy clamours? Comrades, away with him!"

Without heeding his remonstrances and entreaties, they seized upon his books and papers, took some note of the apartment and the utensils, and then bore him off a prisoner.

Inez, left to herself, had passed a sad and lonely evening; seated by a casement which looked into the garden, she had pensively watched star after star sparkle out of the blue depths of the sky, and was indulging a crowd of anxious thoughts about her lover, until the rising tears began to flow. She was suddenly alarmed by the sound of voices that seemed to come from a distant part of the mansion. There was not long after a noise of several persons descending the stairs. Surprised at these unusual sounds in their lonely habitation, she remained for a few moments in a state of trembling, yet indistinct apprehension, when the servant rushed into the room, with terror in her countenance, and informed her that her father was carried off by armed men.

Inez did not stop to hear farther, but flew down stairs to overtake them. She had scarcely passed the threshold, when she found herself in the grasp of strangers.—"Away!—away!"—cried she, wildly; "do not stop me—let me follow my father."

"We come to conduct you to him, senora," said one of the men, respectfully.

"Where is he, then?"

"He is gone to Grenada," replied the man; "an unexpected circumstance requires his presence there immediately; but he is among friends."

"We have no friends in Grenada," said Inez, drawing back; but then the idea of Antonio rushed into her mind; something relating to him might have called her father thither. "Is senor Antonio de Castro with him?" demanded she with agitation.

"I know not, senora," replied the man. "It is very possible. I only know that your father is among friends, and is anxious for you to follow him."

"Let us go, then," cried she, eagerly. The man led her a little distance to where a mule was waiting, and, assisting her to mount, they conducted her slowly towards the city.

Grenada was on that evening a scene of fanciful revel. It was one of the festivals of the *Maestranza*, an association of the nobility to keep up some of the gallant customs of ancient

chivalry. There had been a representation of a tournament in one of the squares; the streets would still occasionally resound with the beat of a solitary drum, or the bray of a trumpet, from some straggling party of revellers. Sometimes they were met by cavaliers, richly dressed in ancient costumes, attended by their squires, and at one time they passed in sight of a palace brilliantly illuminated, from whence came the mingled sounds of music and the dance. Shortly after they came to the square, where the mock tournament had been held. It was thronged by the populace, recreating themselves among booths and stalls where refreshments were sold; and the glare of torches showed the temporary galleries and gay-coloured awnings, and armorial trophies, and other paraphernalia of the show. The conductors of Inez endeavoured to keep out of observation, and to traverse a gloomy part of the square; but they were detained at one place by the pressure of a crowd surrounding a party of wandering musicians, singing one of those ballads of which the Spanish populace are so passionately fond. The torches, which were held by some of the crowd, threw a strong mass of light upon Inez, and the sight of so beautiful a being, without mantilla or veil, looking so bewildered, and conducted by men, who seemed to take no gratification in the surrounding gaiety, occasioned expressions of curiosity. One of the ballad-singers approached, and striking her guitar with peculiar earnestness, began to sing a doleful air, full of sinister forebodings. Inez started with surprise. It was the same ballad-singer that had addressed her in the garden of Generaliffe. It was the same air that she had then sung. It spoke of impending dangers; they seemed, indeed, to be thickening around her. She was anxious to speak with the girl, and to ascertain whether she really had a knowledge of any definite evil that was threatening her; but as she attempted to address her, the mule on which she rode was suddenly seized, and led forcibly through the throng by one of her conductors, while she saw another addressing menacing words to the ballad-singer. The latter raised her hand with a warning gesture as Inez lost sight of her.

While she was yet lost in perplexity, caused by this singular occurrence, they stopped at the gate of a large mansion. One of her attendants knocked, the door was opened, and they entered a paved court. "Where are we?" demanded Inez with anxiety. "At the house of a friend, senora," replied

the man. "Ascend this staircase with me, and in a moment you will meet your father."

They ascended a staircase that led to a suite of splendid apartments. They passed through several, until they came to an inner chamber. The door opened, some one approached; but what was her terror at perceiving, not her father, but Don Ambrosio!

The men who had seized upon the alchymist had, at least, been more honest in their professions. They were, indeed, familiars of the inquisition. He was conducted in silence to the gloomy prison of that horrible tribunal. It was a mansion whose very aspect withered joy, and almost shut out hope. It was one of those hideous abodes which the bad passions of men conjure up in this fair world, to rival the fancied dens of demons and the accursed.

Day after day went heavily by without any thing to mark the lapse of time, but the decline and reappearance of the light that feebly glimmered through the narrow window of the dungeon in which the unfortunate alchymist was buried, rather than confined. His mind was harassed with uncertainties and fears about his daughter, so helpless and inexperienced. He endeavoured to gather tidings of her from the man who brought his daily portion of food. The fellow stared, as if astonished at being asked a question in that mansion of silence and mystery, but departed without saying a word. Every succeeding attempt was equally fruitless.

The poor alchymist was oppressed by many griefs; and it was not the least that he had been again interrupted in his labours on the very point of success. Never was alchymist so near attaining the golden secret—a little longer, and all his hopes would have been realized. The thoughts of these disappointments afflicted him more even than the fear of all that he might suffer from the merciless inquisition. His waking thoughts would follow him into his dreams. He would be transported in fancy to his laboratory, busied again among retorts and alembics, and surrounded by Lully, by D'Abano, by Olybius, and the other masters of the sublime art. The moment of projection would arrive; a seraphic form would rise out of the furnace, holding forth a vessel, containing the precious elixir, but before he could grasp the prize, he would awake, and find himself in a dungeon.

All the devices of inquisitorial ingenuity were employed to ensnare the old man, and to draw from him evidence that might

be brought against himself, and might corroborate certain secret information that had been given against him. He had been accused of practising necromancy and judicial astrology, and a cloud of evidence had been secretly brought forward to substantiate the charge. It would be tedious to enumerate all the circumstances, apparently corroborative, which had been industriously cited by the secret accuser. The silence which prevailed about the tower, its desolateness, the very quiet of its inhabitants, had been adduced as proofs that something sinister was perpetrated within. The alchemist's conversations and soliloquies in the garden had been overheard and misrepresented. The lights and strange appearances at night in the tower were given with violent exaggerations. Shrieks and yells were said to have been heard from thence at midnight, when, it was confidently asserted, the old man raised familiar spirits by his incantations, and even compelled the dead to rise from their graves and answer to his questionings.

The alchemist, according to the custom of the inquisition, was kept in complete ignorance of his accuser; of the witnesses produced against him: even of the crimes of which he was accused. He was examined generally, whether he knew why he was arrested, and was conscious of any guilt that might deserve the notice of the holy office? He was examined as to his country, his life, his habits, his pursuits, his actions, and opinions. The old man was frank and simple in his replies; he was conscious of no guilt, capable of no art, practised in no dissimulation. After receiving a general admonition to bethink himself whether he had not committed any act deserving of punishment, and to prepare, by confession, to secure the well-known mercy of the tribunal, he was remanded to his cell.

He was now visited in his dungeon by crafty familiars of the inquisition; who, under pretence of sympathy and kindness, came to beguile the tediousness of his imprisonment with friendly conversation. They casually introduced the subject of alchemy, on which they touched with great caution and pretended indifference. There was no need of such craftiness. The honest enthusiast had no suspicion in his nature: the moment they touched upon his favourite theme, he forgot his misfortunes and imprisonment, and broke forth into rhapsodies about the divine science.

The conversation was artfully turned to the discussion of

elementary beings. The alchymist readily avowed his belief in them; and that there had been instances of their attending upon philosophers, and administering to their wishes. He related many miracles said to have been performed by Apollonius Thyaneus through the aid of spirits or demons; inso-much that he was set up by the heathens in opposition to the Messiah; and was even regarded with reverence by many Christians. The familiars eagerly demanded whether he believed Apollonius to be a true and worthy philosopher. The unaffected piety of the alchymist protected him even in the midst of his simplicity; for he condemned Apollonius as a sorcerer and an impostor. No art could draw from him an admission that he had ever employed or invoked spiritual agencies in the prosecution of his pursuits, though he believed himself to have been frequently impeded by their invisible interference.

The inquisitors were sorely vexed at not being able to inveigle him into a confession of a criminal nature; they attributed their failure to craft, to obstinacy, to every cause but the right one, namely, that the harmless visionary had nothing guilty to confess. They had abundant proof of a secret nature against him; but it was the practice of the inquisition to endeavour to procure confession from the prisoners. An auto-da-fé was at hand; the worthy fathers were eager for his conviction, for they were always anxious to have a good number of culprits condemned to the stake, to grace these solemn triumphs. He was at length brought to a final examination.

The chamber of trial was spacious and gloomy. At one end was a huge crucifix, the standard of the inquisition. A long table extended through the centre of the room, at which sat the inquisitors and their secretary; at the other end a stool was placed for the prisoner.

He was brought in, according to custom, bare-headed and bare-legged. He was enfeebled by confinement and affliction; by constantly brooding over the unknown fate of his child, and the disastrous interruption of his experiments. He sat bowed down and listless; his head sunk upon his breast; his whole appearance that of one "past hope, abandoned, and by himself given over."

The accusation alleged against him was now brought forward in a specific form; he was called by name, Felix de Vasquez, formerly of Castile, to answer to the charges of negro-

maney and demonology. He was told that the charges were amply substantiated; and was asked whether he was ready, by full confession, to throw himself upon the well-known mercy of the holy inquisition.

The philosopher testified some slight surprise at the nature of the accusation, but simply replied, "I am innocent."

"What proof have you to give of your innocence?"

"It rather remains for you to prove your charges," said the old man. "I am a stranger and a sojourner in the land, and know no one out of the doors of my dwelling. I can give nothing in my vindication but the word of a nobleman and a Castilian."

The inquisitor shook his head, and went on to repeat the various inquiries that had before been made as to his mode of life and pursuit. The poor alchymist was too feeble and too weary at heart to make any but brief replies. He requested that some man of science might examine his laboratory, and all his books and papers, by which it would be made abundantly evident that he was merely engaged in the study of alchymy.

To this the inquisitor observed, that alchymy had become a mere covert for secret and deadly sins. That the practisers of it were apt to scruple at no means to satisfy their inordinate greediness of gold. Some had been known to use spells and impious ceremonies; to conjure the aid of evil spirits; nay, even to sell their souls to the enemy of mankind, so that they might riot in boundless wealth while living.

The poor alchymist had heard all patiently, or, at least, passively. He had disdained to vindicate his name otherwise than by his word; he had smiled at the accusations of sorcery, when applied merely to himself; but when the sublime art, which had been the study and passion of his life, was assailed, he could no longer listen in silence. His head gradually rose from his bosom; a hectic colour came in faint streaks to his cheek; played about there, disappeared, returned, and at length kindled into a burning glow. The clammy dampness dried from his forehead; his eyes, which had been nearly extinguished, lighted up again, and burned with their wonted and visionary fires. He entered into a vindication of his favourite art. His voice at first was feeble and broken; but it gathered strength as he proceeded, until it rolled in a deep and sonorous volume. He gradually rose from his seat as he rose with the subject; he threw back the scanty black mantle

which had hitherto wrapped his limbs; the very uncouthness of his form and looks gave an impressive effect to what he uttered; it was as though a corpse had become suddenly animated.

He repelled with scorn the aspersions cast upon alchymy by the ignorant and vulgar. He affirmed it to be the mother of all art and science, citing the opinions of Paracelsus, Sandivogius, Raymond Lully, and others, in support of his assertions. He maintained that it was pure and innocent, and honourable both in its purposes and means. What were its objects? The perpetuation of life and youth, and the production of gold. "The elixir vitæ," said he, "is no charmed potion, but merely a concentration of those elements of vitality which nature has scattered through her works. The philosopher's stone, or tincture, or powder, as it is variously called, is no necromantic talisman, but consists simply of those particles which gold contains within itself for its reproduction; for gold, like other things, has its seed within itself, though bound up with inconceivable firmness, from the vigour of innate fixed salts and sulphurs. In seeking to discover the elixir of life, then," continued he, "we seek only to apply some of nature's own specifics against the disease and decay to which our bodies are subjected; and what else does the physician, when he tasks his art, and uses subtle compounds and cunning distillations to revive our languishing powers, and avert the stroke of death for a season?"

"In seeking to multiply the precious metals, also, we seek but to germinate and multiply, by natural means, a particular species of nature's productions; and what else does the husbandman, who consults times and seasons, and, by what might be deemed a natural magic, from the mere scattering of his hand, covers a whole plain with golden vegetation? The mysteries of our art, it is true, are deeply and darkly hidden; but it requires so much the more innocence and purity of thought to penetrate unto them. No, father! the true alchymist must be pure in mind and body; he must be temperate, patient, chaste, watchful, meek, humble, devout. 'My son,' says Hermes Trismegistes, the great master of our art, 'My son, I recommend you above all things to fear God.' And indeed it is only by devout castigation of the senses and purification of the soul, that the alchymist is enabled to enter into the sacred chambers of truth. 'Labour, pray, and read,' is the motto of our science. As De Nuysment well observes,

'These high and singular favours are granted unto none, save only unto the sons of God (that is to say, the virtuous and devout), who, under his paternal benediction, have obtained the opening of the same, by the helping hand of the queen of arts—divine Philosophy.' Indeed, so sacred has the nature of this knowledge been considered, that we are told it has four times expressly been communicated by God to man, having made a part of that cabalistical wisdom which was revealed to Adam to console him for the loss of Paradise, and to Moses in the bush, and to Solomon in a dream, and to Esdras by the angel.

"So far from demons and malign spirits being the friends and abettors of the alchymist, they are the continual foes with which he has to contend. It is their constant endeavour to shut up the avenues to those truths which would enable him to rise above the abject state into which he has fallen, and return to that excellence which was his original birthright. For what would be the effect of this length of days, and this abundant wealth, but to enable the possessor to go on from art to art, from science to science, with energies unimpaired by sickness, uninterrupted by death? For this have sages and philosophers shut themselves up in cells and solitudes; buried themselves in caves and dens of the earth; turning from the joys of life and the pleasance of the world; enduring scorn, poverty, persecution. For this was Raymond Lully stoned to death in Mauritania. For this did the immortal Pietro D'Abano suffer persecution at Padua, and when he escaped from his oppressors by death, was despitefully burned in effigy. For this, have illustrious men of all nations intrepidly suffered martyrdom. For this, if unmolested, have they assiduously employed the latest hour of life, the expiring throb of existence, hoping to the last that they might yet seize upon the prize for which they had struggled, and pluck themselves back even from the very jaws of the grave!

"For, when once the alchymist shall have attained the object of his toils; when the sublime secret shall be revealed to his gaze, how glorious will be the change in his condition! How will he emerge from his solitary retreat, like the sun breaking forth from the darksome chamber of the night, and darting his beams throughout the earth! Gifted with perpetual youth and boundless riches, to what heights of wisdom may he attain! How may he carry on, uninter-

rupted, the thread of knowledge, which has hitherto been snapped at the death of each philosopher! And, as the increase of wisdom is the increase of virtue, how may he become the benefactor of his fellow-men; dispensing with liberal, but cautious and discriminating hand, that inexhaustible wealth which is at his disposal; banishing poverty, which is the cause of so much sorrow and wickedness; encouraging the arts; promoting discoveries, and enlarging all the means of virtuous enjoyment! His life will be the connecting band of generations. History will live in his recollection; distant ages will speak with his tongue. The nations of the earth will look to him as their preceptor, and kings will sit at his feet and learn wisdom. Oh glorious! Oh celestial alchymy!"——

Here he was interrupted by the inquisitor, who had suffered him to go on thus far, in hopes of gathering something from his unguarded enthusiasm. "Señor," said he, "this is all rambling, visionary talk. You are charged with sorcery, and in defence you give us a rhapsody about alchymy. Have you nothing better than this to offer in your defence?"

The old man slowly resumed his seat, but did not deign a reply. The fire that had beamed in his eye gradually expired. His cheek resumed its wonted paleness; but he did not relapse into inanity. He sat with a steady, serene, patient look, like one prepared not to contend, but to suffer.

His trial continued for a long time, with cruel mockery of justice, for no witnesses were ever, in this court, confronted with the accused, and the latter had continually to defend himself in the dark. Some unknown and powerful enemy had alleged charges against the unfortunate alchymist, but who he could not imagine. Stranger and sojourner as he was in the land, solitary and harmless in his pursuits, how could he have provoked such hostility? The tide of secret testimony, however, was too strong against him; he was convicted of the crime of magic, and condemned to expiate his sins at the stake, at the approaching auto-da-fé.

While the unhappy alchymist was undergoing his trial at the inquisition, his daughter was exposed to trials no less severe. Don Ambrosio, into whose hands she had fallen, was, as has before been intimated, one of the most daring and lawless profligates in all Grenada. He was a man of hot blood and fiery passions, who stopped at nothing in the gratification of his desires; yet with all this he possessed

manners, address, and accomplishments, that had made him eminently successful among the sex. From the palace to the cottage he had extended his amorous enterprises; his serenades harassed the slumbers of half the husbands in Grenada; no balcony was too high for his adventurous attempts; nor any cottage too lowly for his perfidious seductions. Yet he was as fickle as he was ardent; success had made him vain and capricious; he had no sentiment to attach him to the victim of his arts, and many a pale cheek and fading eye, languishing amidst the sparkling of jewels; and many a breaking heart, throbbing under the rustic boddice, bore testimony to his triumphs and his faithlessness.

He was sated, however, by easy conquests, and wearied of a life of continual and prompt gratification. There had been a degree of difficulty and enterprise in the pursuit of Inez, that he had never before experienced. It had aroused him from the monotony of mere sensual life, and stimulated him with the charm of adventure. He had become an epicure in pleasure; and now that he had this coy beauty in his power, he was determined to protract his enjoyment, by the gradual conquest of her scruples, and downfall of her virtue. He was vain of his person and address, which he thought no woman could long withstand; and it was a kind of trial of skill, to endeavour to gain by art and fascination, what he was secure of obtaining at any time by violence.

When Inez, therefore, was brought into his presence by his emissaries, he affected not to notice her terror and surprise; but received her with formal and stately courtesy. He was too wary a fowler to flutter the bird when just entangled in the net. To her eager and wild inquiries about her father, he begged her not to be alarmed; that he was safe, and had been there, but was engaged elsewhere in an affair of moment, from which he would soon return: in the meantime he had left word, that she should await his return in patience. After some stately expressions of general civility, Don Ambrosio made a ceremonious bow and retired.

The mind of Inez was full of trouble and perplexity. The stately formality of Don Ambrosio was so unexpected as to check the accusations and reproaches that were springing to her lips. Had he had evil designs, would he have treated her with such frigid ceremony when he had her in his power? But why, then, was she brought to his house? Was not the mysterious disappearance of Antonio connected with this? A

thought suddenly darted into her mind. Antonio had again met with Don Ambrosio—they had fought—Antonio was wounded—perhaps dying!—It was him to whom her father had gone.—It was at his request that Don Ambrosio had sent for them to soothe his dying moments! These, and a thousand such horrible suggestions harassed her mind; but she tried in vain to get information from the domestics; they knew nothing but that her father had been there, had gone, and would soon return.

Thus passed a night of tumultuous thought, and vague yet cruel apprehensions. She knew not what to do, or what to believe; whether she ought to fly, or to remain; but if to fly, how was she to extricate herself? and where was she to seek her father? As the day dawned without any intelligence of him, her alarm increased; at length a message was brought from him, saying that circumstances prevented his return to her, but begging her to hasten to him without delay.

With an eager and throbbing heart did she set forth with the men that were to conduct her. She little thought, however, that she was merely changing her prison-house. Don Ambrosio had feared lest she should be traced to his residence in Grenada; or that he might be interrupted there before he could accomplish his plan of seduction. He had her now conveyed, therefore, to a mansion which he possessed in one of the mountain solitudes in the neighbourhood of Grenada: a lonely, but beautiful retreat. In vain, on her arrival, did she look around for her father, or Antonio; none but strange faces met her eye; menials profoundly respectful, but who knew nor saw anything but what their master pleased.

She had scarcely arrived before Don Ambrosio made his appearance, less stately in his manner, but still treating her with the utmost delicacy and deference. Inez was too much agitated and alarmed to be baffled by his courtesy, and became vehement in her demand to be conducted to her father.

Don Ambrosio now put on an appearance of the greatest embarrassment and emotion. After some delay, and much pretended confusion, he at length confessed that the seizure of her father was all a stratagem; a mere false alarm to procure him the present opportunity of having access to her, and endeavouring to mitigate that obduracy, and conquer that repugnance, which he declared had almost driven him to distraction.

He assured her that her father was again at home in safety,

and occupied in his usual pursuits; having been fully satisfied that his daughter was in honourable hands, and would soon be restored to him. It was in vain that she threw herself at his feet, and implored to be set at liberty; he only replied, by gentle entreaties, that she would pardon the seeming violence he had to use; and that she would trust a little while to his honour. "You are here," said he, "absolute mistress of everything: nothing shall be said or done to offend you; I will not even intrude upon your ear the unhappy passion that is devouring my heart. Should you require it, I will even absent myself from your presence; but to part with you entirely at present, with your mind full of doubts and resentments, would be worse than death to me. No, beautiful Inez, you must first know me a little better, and know by my conduct, that my passion for you is as delicate and respectful as it is vehement."

The assurance of her father's safety had relieved Inez from one cause of torturing anxiety, only to render her fears the more violent on her own account. Don Ambrosio, however, continued to treat her with artful deference, that insensibly lulled her apprehensions. It is true she found herself a captive, but no advantage appeared to be taken of her helplessness. She soothed herself with the idea that a little while would suffice to convince Don Ambrosio of the fallacy of his hopes, and that he would be induced to restore her to her home. Her transports of terror and affliction, therefore, subsided, in a few days, into a passive, yet anxious melancholy, with which she awaited the hoped-for event.

In the meanwhile all those artifices were employed that are calculated to charm the senses, ensnare the feelings, and dissolve the heart into tenderness. Don Ambrosio was a master of the subtle arts of seduction. His very mansion breathed an enervating atmosphere of languor and delight. It was here, amidst twilight saloons and dreamy chambers, buried among groves of orange and myrtle, that he shut himself up at times from the prying world, and gave free scope to the gratification of his pleasures.

The apartments were furnished in the most sumptuous and voluptuous manner: the silken couches swelled to the touch, and sunk in downy softness beneath the slightest pressure. The paintings and statues all told some classic tale of love, managed, however, with an insidious delicacy; which, while it banished the grossness that might disgust, was the more

calculated to excite the imagination. There the blooming Adonis was seen, not breaking away to pursue the boisterous chase, but crowned with flowers, and languishing in the embraces of celestial beauty. There Acis wooed his Galatea in the shade, with the Sicilian sea spreading in halcyon serenity before them. There were depicted groups of fauns and dryads, fondly reclining in summer bowers, and listening to the liquid piping of the reed; or the wanton satyrs surprising some wood-nymph during her noontide slumber. There, too, on the storied tapestry, might be seen the chaste Diana, stealing, in the mystery of moonlight, to kiss the sleeping Endymion; while Cupid and Psyche, entwined in immortal marble, breathed on each other's lips the early kiss of love.

The ardent rays of the sun were excluded from these balmy halls; soft and tender music from unseen musicians floated around, seeming to mingle with the perfumes that were exhaled from a thousand flowers. At night, when the moon shed a fairy light over the scene, the tender serenade would rise from among the bowers of the garden, in which the fine voice of Don Ambrosio might often be distinguished; or the amorous flute would be heard along the mountain, breathing in its pensive cadences the very soul of a lover's melancholy.

Various entertainments were also devised to dispel her loneliness, and to charm away the idea of confinement. Groups of Andalusian dancers performed in the splendid saloons the various picturesque dances of their country; or represented little amorous ballets, which turned upon some pleasing scene of pastoral coquetry and courtship. Sometimes there were bands of singers, who, to the romantic guitar, warbled forth ditties full of passion and tenderness.

Thus all about her enticed to pleasure and voluptuousness; but the heart of Inez turned with distaste from this idle mockery. The tears would rush into her eyes as her thoughts reverted from this scene of profligate splendour, to the humble but virtuous home from whence she had been betrayed; or if the witching power of music ever soothed her into a tender reverie, it was to dwell with fondness on the image of Antonio. But if Don Ambrosio, deceived by this transient calm, should attempt at such a time to whisper his passion, she would start as from a dream, and recoil from him with involuntary shuddering.

She had passed one long day of more than ordinary sadness, and in the evening a band of these hired performers were

exerting all the animating powers of song and dance to amuse her. But while the lofty saloon resounded with their warblings, and the light sound of feet upon its marble pavement kept time to the cadence of the song, poor Inez, with her face buried in the silken couch on which she reclined, was only rendered more wretched by the sound of gaiety.

At length her attention was caught by the voice of one of the singers, that brought with it some indefinite recollections. She raised her head, and cast an anxious look at the performers, who, as usual, were at the lower end of the saloon. One of them advanced a little before the others. It was a female dressed in a fanciful pastoral garb, suited to the character she was sustaining; but her countenance was not to be mistaken. It was the same ballad-singer that had twice crossed her path, and given her mysterious intimations of the lurking mischief that surrounded her. When the rest of the performances were concluded, she seized a tambourine, and tossing it aloft, danced alone to the melody of her own voice. In the course of her dancing she approached to where Inez reclined; and as she struck the tambourine, contrived, dexterously, to throw a folded paper on the couch. Inez seized it with avidity, and concealed it in her bosom. The singing and dancing were at an end; the motley crew retired; and Inez, left alone, hastened with anxiety to unfold the paper thus mysteriously conveyed. It was written in an agitated, and almost illegible, handwriting:—"Be on your guard; you are surrounded by treachery. Trust not to the forbearance of Don Ambrosio; you are marked out for his prey. An humble victim to his perfidy gives you this warning; she is encompassed by too many dangers to be more explicit. Your father is in the dungeons of the inquisition!"

The brain of Inez reeled as she read this dreadful scroll. She was less filled with alarm at her own danger, than horror at her father's situation. The moment Don Ambrosio appeared, she rushed and threw herself at his feet, imploring him to save her father. Don Ambrosio started with astonishment; but immediately regaining his self-possession, endeavoured to soothe her by his blandishments, and by assurances that her father was in safety. She was not to be pacified; her fears were too much aroused to be trifled with. She declared her knowledge of her father's being a prisoner of the inquisition, and reiterated her frantic supplications that he would save him.

Don Ambrosio paused for a moment in perplexity, but was too adroit to be easily confounded. "That your father is a prisoner," replied he, "I have long known. I have concealed it from you, to save you from fruitless anxiety. You now know the real reason of the restraint I have put upon your liberty; I have been protecting instead of detaining you. Every exertion has been made in your father's favour; but I regret to say, the proofs of the offences of which he stands charged have been too strong to be controverted. Still," added he, "I have it in my power to save him; I have influence, I have means at my beck; it may involve, it is true, in difficulties, perhaps in disgrace, but what would I not do in the hopes of being rewarded by your favour? Speak, beautiful Inez," said he, his eyes kindling with sudden eagerness, "it is with you to say the word that seals your father's fate. One kind word, say but you will be mine, and you will behold me at your feet, your father at liberty and in affluence, and we shall all be happy!"

Inez drew back from him with scorn and disbelief. "My father," exclaimed she, "is too innocent and blameless to be convicted of crime; this is some base, some cruel artifice!" Don Ambrosio repeated his asseverations, and with them also his dishonourable proposals; but his eagerness overshot its mark; her indignation and her incredulity were alike awakened by his base suggestions; and he retired from her presence checked and awed by the sudden pride and dignity of her demeanour.

The unfortunate Inez now became a prey to the most harrowing anxieties. Don Ambrosio saw that the mask had fallen from his face, and that the nature of his machinations was revealed. He had gone too far to retrace his steps, and assume the affectation of tenderness and respect; indeed he was mortified and incensed at her insensibility to his attractions, and now only sought to subdue her through her fears. He daily represented to her the dangers that threatened her father, and that it was in his power alone to avert them. Inez was still incredulous. She was too ignorant of the nature of the inquisition to know that even innocence was not always a protection from its cruelties; and she confided too surely in the virtue of her father to believe that any accusation could prevail against him.

At length, Don Ambrosio, to give an effectual blow to her confidence, brought her the proclamation of the approaching

auto-da-fé, in which the prisoners were enumerated. She glanced her eye over it, and beheld her father's name, condemned to the stake for sorcery.

For a moment she stood transfixed with horror. Don Ambrosio seized upon the transient calm. "Think, now, beautiful Inez," said he, with a tone of affected tenderness, "his life is still in your hands; one word from you, one kind word, and I can yet save him."

"Monster! wretch!" cried she, coming to herself, and recoiling from him with insuperable abhorrence: "'tis you that are the cause of this—'tis you that are his murderer!" Then, wringing her hands, she broke forth into exclamations of the most frantic agony.

The perfidious Ambrosio saw the torture of her soul, and anticipated from it a triumph. He saw that she was in no mood, during her present paroxysm, to listen to his words; but he trusted that the horrors of lonely rumination would break down her spirits, and subdue her to his will. In this, however, he was disappointed. Many were the vicissitudes of mind of the wretched Inez; one time she would embrace his knees with piercing supplications; at another she would shrink with nervous horror at his very approach; but any intimation of his passion only excited the same emotion of loathing and detestation.

At length the fatal day drew nigh. "To-morrow," said Don Ambrosio, as he left her one evening, "To-morrow is the auto-da-fé. To-morrow you will hear the sound of the bell that tolls your father to his death. You will almost see the smoke that rises from his funeral pile. I leave it to yourself. It is yet in my power to save him. Think whether you can stand to-morrow's horrors without shrinking. Think whether you can endure the after reflection, that you were the cause of his death, and that merely through a perversity in refusing proffered happiness."

What a night was it to Inez! Her heart, already harassed and almost broken by repeated and protracted anxieties; her strength wasted and enfeebled. On every side horrors awaited her; her father's death, her own dishonour; there seemed no escape from misery or perdition. "Is there no relief from man—no pity in Heaven?" exclaimed she. "What—what have we done that we should be thus wretched?"

As the dawn approached, the fever of her mind arose to agony: a thousand times did she try the doors and windows

of her apartment, in the desperate hope of escaping. Alas, with all the splendour of her prison, it was too faithfully secured for her weak hands to work deliverance. Like a poor bird, that beats its wings against its gilded cage, until it sinks panting in despair, so she threw herself on the floor in hopeless anguish. Her blood grew hot in her veins, her tongue was parched, her temples throbbed with violence, she gasped rather than breathed; it seemed as if her brain was on fire. "Blessed Virgin!" exclaimed she, clasping her hands, and turning up her strained eyes, "look down with pity, and support me in this dreadful hour!"

Just as the day began to dawn, she heard a key turn softly in the door of her apartment. She dreaded lest it should be Don Ambrosio; and the very thought of him gave her a sickening pang. It was a female, clad in a rustic dress, with her face concealed by her mantilla. She stepped silently into the room, looked cautiously round, and then uncovering her face, revealed the well-known features of the ballad-singer. Inez uttered an exclamation of surprise, almost of joy. The unknown started back, pressed her finger on her lips enjoining silence, and beckoned her to follow. She hastily wrapped herself in her veil, and obeyed. They passed with quick but noiseless steps through an antechamber, across a spacious hall, and along a corridor; all was silent; the household was yet locked in sleep. They came to a door, to which the unknown applied a key. Inez' heart misgave her; she knew not but some new treachery was menacing her; she laid her cold hand on the stranger's arm: "Whither are you leading me?" said she. "To liberty," replied the other, in a whisper.

"Do you know the passages about this mansion?"

"But too well!" replied the girl, with a melancholy shake of the head. There was an expression of sad veracity in her countenance that was not to be distrusted. The door opened on a small terrace, which was overlooked by several windows of the mansion.

"We must move across this quickly," said the girl, "or we may be observed."

They glided over it as if scarce touching the ground. A flight of steps led down into the garden; a wicket at the bottom was readily unbolted: they passed with breathless velocity along one of the alleys, still in sight of the mansion, in which, however, no person appeared to be stirring. At length they came to a low private door in the wall, partly

hidden by a fig-tree. It was secured by rusty bolts, that refused to yield to their feeble efforts.

"Holy Virgin!" exclaimed the stranger, "what is to be done' one moment more, and we may be discovered."

She seized a stone that lay near by; a few blows and the bolts flew back; the door grated harshly as they opened it, and the next moment they found themselves in a narrow road.

"Now," said the stranger, "for Grenada, as quickly as possible! The nearer we approach it the safer we shall be; for the road will be more frequented."

The imminent risk they ran of being pursued and taken, gave supernatural strength to their limbs; they flew rather than ran. The day had dawned; the crimson streaks on the edge of the horizon gave tokens of the approaching sunrise; already the light clouds that floated in the western sky were tinged with gold and purple; though the broad plain of the Vega, which now began to open upon their view, was covered with the dark haze of morning. As yet they only passed a few straggling peasants on the road, who could have yielded them no assistance in case of their being overtaken. They continued to hurry forward, and had gained a considerable distance, when the strength of Inez, which had only been sustained by the fever of her mind, began to yield to fatigue: she slackened her pace and faltered.

"Alas!" said she, "my limbs fail me! I can go no farther!"

"Bear up, bear up," replied her companion, cheerily; "a little farther, and we shall be safe. Look! yonder is Grenada, just showing itself in the valley below us. A little farther, and we shall come to the main road, and then we shall find plenty of passengers to protect us."

Inez, encouraged, made fresh efforts to get forward, but her weary limbs were unequal to the eagerness of her mind; her mouth and throat were parched by agony and terror: she gasped for breath, and leaned for support against a rock. "It is all in vain!" exclaimed she; "I feel as though I should faint."

"Lean on me," said the other; "let us get into the shelter of yon thicket, that will conceal us from the view; I hear the sound of water, which will refresh you."

With much difficulty they reached the thicket, which overhung a small mountain stream, just where its sparkling waters leaped over the rock and fell into a natural basin.

Here Inez sank upon the ground exhausted. Her companion brought water in the palms of her hands, and bathed her pallid temples. The cooling drops revived her; she was enabled to get to the margin of the stream, and drink of its crystal current; then, reclining her head on the bosom of her deliverer, she was first enabled to murmur forth her heartfelt gratitude.

"Alas!" said the other, "I deserve no thanks; I deserve not the good opinions you express. In me you behold a victim of Don Ambrosio's arts. In early years he seduced me from the cottage of my parents: look! at the foot of yonder blue mountain in the distance lies my native village: but it is no longer a home for me. From thence he lured me when I was too young for reflection: he educated me, taught me various accomplishments, made me sensible to love, to splendour, to refinement; then, having grown weary of me, he neglected me, and cast me upon the world. Happily the accomplishments he taught me have kept me from utter want; and the love with which he inspired me has kept me from further degradation. Yes! I confess my weakness; all his perfidy and wrongs cannot efface him from my heart. I have been brought up to love him; I have no other idol: I know him to be base, yet I cannot help adoring him. I am content to mingle among the hireling throng that administer to his amusements, that I may still hover about him, and linger in those halls where I once reigned mistress. What merit, then, have I in assisting your escape? I scarce know whether I am acting from sympathy, and a desire to rescue another victim from his power; or jealousy, and an eagerness to remove too powerful a rival!"

While she was yet speaking, the sun rose in all its splendour; first lighting up the mountain summits, then stealing down height by height, until its rays gilded the domes and towers of Grenada, which they could partially see from between the trees, below them. Just then the heavy tones of a bell came sounding from a distance, echoing in sullen clang along the mountain. Inez turned pale at the sound. She knew it to be the great bell of the cathedral, rung at sunrise on the day of the auto-da-fé, to give note of funeral preparation. Every stroke beat upon her heart, and inflicted an absolute, corporeal pang. She started up wildly. "Let us be gone!" cried she; "there is not a moment for delay!"

"Stop!" exclaimed the other, "yonder are horsemen

coming over the brow of that distant height; if I mistake not, Don Ambrosio is at their head.—Alas! 'tis he; we are lost. Hold!" continued she, "give me your scarf and veil; wrap yourself in this mantilla. I will fly up yon footpath that leads to the heights. I will let the veil flutter as I ascend; perhaps they may mistake me for you, and they must dismount to follow me. Do you hasten forward; you will soon reach the main road. You have jewels on your fingers; bribe the first muleteer you meet to assist you on your way."

All this was said with hurried and breathless rapidity. The exchange of garments was made in an instant. The girl darted up the mountain path, her white veil fluttering among the dark shrubbery; while Inez, inspired with new strength, or rather new terror, flew to the road, and trusted to Providence to guide her tottering steps to Grenada.

All Grenada was in agitation on the morning of this dismal day. The heavy bell of the cathedral continued to utter its clanging tones, that pervaded every part of the city, summoning all persons to the tremendous spectacle that was about to be exhibited. The streets through which the procession was to pass were crowded with the populace. The windows, the roofs, every place that could admit a face or a foothold, was alive with spectators. In the great square, a spacious scaffolding, like an amphitheatre, was erected, where the sentences of the prisoners were to be read, and the sermon of faith to be preached; and close by were the stakes prepared where the condemned were to be burned to death. Seats were arranged for the great, the gay, the beautiful; for such is the horrible curiosity of human nature, that this cruel sacrifice was attended with more eagerness than a theatre, or even a bull feast.

As the day advanced, the scaffolds and balconies were filled with expecting multitudes; the sun shone brightly upon fair faces and gallant dresses: one would have thought it some scene of elegant festivity instead of an exhibition of human agony and death. But what a different spectacle and ceremony was this from those which Grenada exhibited in the days of her Moorish splendour! "Her galas, her tournaments, her sports of the ring, her fêtes of St. John, her music, her Zambras, and admirable tilts of canes! Her serenades, her concerts, her songs in Generaliffe! The costly liveries of the Abencerrages, their exquisite inventions, the skill and valour of the Alabaces, the superb dresses of the Zegries,

Mazas, and Gomeles!"* All these were at an end. The days of chivalry were over. Instead of the prancing cavalcade, with neighing steed and lively trumpet; with burnished lance, and helm, and buckler; with rich confusion of plume, and scarf, and banner, where purple, and scarlet, and green, and orange, and every gay colour were mingled with cloth of gold and fair embroidery; instead of this crept on the gloomy pageant of superstition, in cowl and sackcloth, with cross and coffin, and frightful symbols of human suffering. In place of the frank, hardy knight, open and brave, with his lady's favour in his casque, and amorous motto on his shield, looking, by gallant deeds, to win the smile of beauty, came the shaven, unmanly monk, with downcast eyes, and head and heart bleached in the cold cloister, secretly exulting in this bigot triumph.

The sound of bells gave notice that the dismal procession was advancing. It passed slowly through the principal streets of the city, bearing in advance the awful banner of the holy office. The prisoners walked singly, attended by confessors and guarded by familiars of the inquisition. They were clad in different garments, according to the nature of their punishments; those who were to suffer death wore the hideous Samarra, painted with flames and demons. The procession was swelled by choirs of boys, by different religious orders and public dignitaries, and, above all, by the fathers of the faith, moving "with slow pace and profound gravity, truly triumphing as becomes the principal generals of that great victory."†

As the sacred banner of the inquisition advanced, the countless throng sunk on their knees before it; they bowed their faces to the very earth as it passed, and then slowly rose again, like a great undulating billow. A murmur of tongues prevailed as the prisoners approached, and eager eyes were strained, and fingers pointed, to distinguish the different orders of penitents, whose habits denoted the degree of punishment they were to undergo. But as those drew near whose frightful garb marked them as destined to the flames, the noise of the rabble subsided; they seemed almost to hold in their breaths; filled with that strange and dismal interest with which we contemplate a human being on the verge of suffering and death.

* Rodd's Civil Wars of Grenada.

† Gonsalvus, p. 135.

It is an awful thing—a voiceless, noiseless multitude! The hushed and gazing stillness of the surrounding thousands, heaped on walls, and gates, and roofs, and hanging as it were in clusters, heightened the effect of the pageant that moved drearily on. The low murmuring of the priests could now be heard in prayer and exhortation, with the faint responses of the prisoners, and now and then the voices of the choir at a distance chanting the litanies of the saints.

The faces of the prisoners were ghastly and disconsolate. Even those who had been pardoned, and wore the Sanbenito, or penitential garment, bore traces of the horrors they had undergone. Some were feeble and tottering from long confinement; some crippled and distorted by various tortures; every countenance was a dismal page, on which might be read the secrets of their prison-house. But in the looks of those condemned to death there was something fierce and eager. They seemed men harrowed up by the past, and desperate as to the future. They were anticipating, with spirits fevered by despair, and fixed and clenched determination, the vehement struggle with agony and death which they were shortly to undergo. Some cast now and then a wild and anguished look about them upon the shining day; the “sun-bright palaces,” the gay, the beautiful world, which they were soon to quit for ever; or a glance of sudden indignation at the thronging thousands, happy in liberty and life, who seemed, in contemplating their frightful situation, to exult in their own comparative security.

One among the condemned, however, was an exception to these remarks. It was an aged man, somewhat bowed down, with a serene, though dejected countenance, and a beaming, melancholy eye. It was the alchymist. The populace looked upon him with a degree of compassion, which they were not prone to feel towards criminals condemned by the inquisition; but when they were told that he was convicted of the crime of magic, they drew back with awe and abhorrence.

The procession had reached the grand square. The first part had already mounted the scaffolding, and the condemned were approaching. The press of the populace became excessive, and was repelled as it were in billows by the guards. Just as the condemned were entering the square, a shrieking was heard from the crowd. A female, pale, frantic, dishevelled, was seen struggling through the multitude. “My father! my father!” was all the cry she uttered, but it

thrilled through every heart. The crowd instinctively drew back, and made way for her as she advanced.

The poor alchemist had made his peace with Heaven, and, by hard struggle, had closed his heart upon the world, when the voice of his child called him once more back to worldly thought and agony. He turned towards the well-known voice; his knees smote together; he endeavoured to stretch forth his pinioned arms, and felt himself clasped in the embraces of his child. The emotions of both were too agonizing for utterance. Convulsive sobs, and broken exclamations, and embraces, more of anguish than tenderness, were all that passed between them. The procession was interrupted for a moment. The astonished monks and familiars were filled with involuntary respect at this agony of natural affection. Ejaculations of pity broke from the crowd, touched by the filial piety, the extraordinary and hopeless anguish of so young and beautiful a being.

Every attempt to soothe her, and prevail on her to retire, was unheeded; at length they endeavoured to separate her from her father by force. The movement roused her from her temporary abandonment. With a sudden paroxysm of fury, she snatched a sword from one of the familiars. Her late pale countenance was flushed with rage, and fire flashed from her once soft and languishing eyes. The guards shrunk back with awe. There was something in this filial frenzy, this feminine tenderness wrought up to desperation, that touched even their hardened hearts. They endeavoured to pacify her, but in vain. Her eye was eager and quick as the she-wolf's guarding her young. With one arm she pressed her father to her bosom, with the other she menaced every one that approached.

The patience of the guards was soon exhausted. They had held back in awe, but not in fear. With all her desperation the weapon was soon wrested from her feeble hand, and she was borne shrieking and struggling among the crowd. The rabble murmured compassion; but such was the dread inspired by the inquisition, that no one attempted to interfere.

The procession again resumed its march. Inez was ineffectually struggling to release herself from the hands of the familiars that detained her, when suddenly she saw Don Ambrosio before her. "Wretched girl!" exclaimed he with fury, "why have you fled from your friends? Deliver her," said he to the familiars, "to my domestics; she is under my protection."

His creatures advanced to seize her. "Oh no! oh no!" cried she with new terrors, and clinging to the familiars, "I have fled from no friends. He is not my protector! He is the murderer of my father!"

The familiars were perplexed; the crowd pressed on with eager curiosity. "Stand off!" cried the fiery Ambrosio, dashing the throng from around him. Then turning to the familiars, with sudden moderation, "my friends," said he, "deliver this poor girl to me. Her distress has turned her brain: she has escaped from her friends and protectors this morning; but a little quiet and kind treatment will restore her to tranquillity."

"I am not mad! I am not mad!" cried she, vehemently. "Oh save me!—save me from these men! I have no protector on earth but my father, and him they are murdering!"

The familiars shook their heads; her wildness corroborated the assertions of Don Ambrosio, and his apparent rank commanded respect and belief. They relinquished their charge to him, and he was consigning the struggling Inez to his creatures.

"Let go your hold, villain!" cried a voice from among the crowd, and Antonio was seen eagerly tearing his way through the press of people.

"Seize him! seize him!" cried Don Ambrosio to the familiars: "'tis an accomplice of the sorcerer's."

"Liar!" retorted Antonio, as he thrust the mob to the right and left, and forced himself to the spot.

The sword of Don Ambrosio flashed in an instant from the scabbard; the student was armed, and equally alert. There was a fierce clash of weapons; the crowd made way for them as they fought, and closed again, so as to hide them from the view of Inez. All was tumult and confusion for a moment; when there was a kind of shout from the spectators, and the mob again opening, she beheld, as she thought, Antonio weltering in his blood.

This new shock was too great for her already overstrained intellect. A giddiness seized upon her; everything seemed to whirl before her eyes; she gasped some incoherent words, and sunk senseless upon the ground.

Days, weeks elapsed before Inez returned to consciousness. At length she opened her eyes, as if out of a troubled sleep. She was lying upon a magnificent bed, in a chamber richly furnished with pier glasses and massive tables inlaid with

silver, of exquisite wormankship. The walls were covered with tapestry; the cornices richly gilded; through the door, which stood open, she perceived a superb saloon, with statues and crystal lustres, and a magnificent suite of apartments beyond. The casements of the room were open to admit the soft breath of summer, which stole in, laden with perfumes from a neighbouring garden; from whence, also, the refreshing sound of fountains and the sweet notes of birds came in mingled music to her ear.

Female attendants were moving with noiseless step about the chamber; but she feared to address them. 'She doubted whether this was not all delusion, or whether she was not still in the palace of Don Ambrosio, and that her escape, and all its circumstances, had not been but a feverish dream. She closed her eyes again, endeavouring to recal the past, and to separate the real from the imaginary. The last scenes of consciousness, however, rushed too forcibly, with all their horrors, to her mind, to be doubted, and she turned shuddering from the recollection, to gaze once more on the quiet and serene magnificence around her. As she again opened her eyes, they rested on an object that at once dispelled every alarm. At the head of her bed sat a venerable form, watching over her with a look of fond anxiety—it was her father.

I shall not attempt to describe the scene that ensued; nor the moment of rapture which more than repaid all the sufferings that her affectionate heart had undergone. As soon as their feelings became more calm, the alchymist stepped out of the room to introduce a stranger, to whom he was indebted for his life and liberty. He returned, leading in Antonio, no longer in his poor scholar's garb, but in the rich dress of a nobleman.

The feelings of Inez were almost overpowered by these sudden reverses, and it was some time before she was sufficiently composed to comprehend the explanation of this seeming romance.

It appeared that the lover, who had sought her affections in the lowly guise of a student, was the only son and heir of a powerful grandee of Valentia. He had been placed at the university of Salamanca; but a lively curiosity and an eagerness for adventure, had induced him to abandon the university, without his father's consent, and to visit various parts of Spain. His rambling inclination satisfied, he had remained incognito for a time at Grenada, until, by further study and

self-regulation, he could prepare himself to return home with credit, and atone for his transgressions against paternal authority.

How hard he had studied does not remain on record. All that we know is his romantic adventure of the tower. It was at first a mere youthful caprice, excited by a glimpse of a beautiful face. In becoming a disciple of the alchymist, he probably thought of nothing more than pursuing a light love affair. Further acquaintance, however, had completely fixed his affections; and he had determined to conduct Inez and her father to Valentia, and to trust to her merits to secure his father's consent to their union.

In the meantime he had been traced to his concealment. His father had received intelligence of his being entangled in the snares of a mysterious adventurer and his daughter, and likely to become the dupe of the fascinations of the latter. Trusty emissaries had been despatched to seize upon him by main force, and convey him without delay to the paternal home.

What eloquence he had used with his father to convince him of the innocence, the honour, and the high descent of the alchymist, and of the exalted worth of his daughter, does not appear. All that we know is, that the father, though a very passionate, was a very reasonable man, as appears by his consenting that his son should return to Grenada, and conduct Inez, as his affianced bride, to Valentia.

Away, then, Don Antonio hurried back, full of joyous anticipations. He still forebore to throw off his disguise, fondly picturing to himself what would be the surprise of Inez, when, having won her heart and hand as a poor wandering scholar, he should raise her and her father at once to opulence and splendour.

On his arrival he had been shocked at finding the tower deserted by its inhabitants. In vain he sought for intelligence concerning them; a mystery hung over their disappearance which he could not penetrate, until he was thunderstruck, on accidentally reading a list of the prisoners at the impending auto-da-fé, to find the name of his venerable master among the condemned.

It was the very morning of the execution. The procession was already on its way to the grand square. Not a moment was to be lost. The grand inquisitor was a relation of Don Antonio, though they had never met. His first impulse was to make himself known; to exert all his family influence, the

weight of his name, and the power of his eloquence, in vindication of the alchemist. But the grand inquisitor was already proceeding, in all his pomp, to the place where the fatal ceremony was to be performed. How was he to be approached? Antonio threw himself into the crowd in a fever of anxiety, and was forcing his way to the scene of horror, when he arrived just in time to rescue Inez, as has been mentioned.

It was Don Ambrosio that fell in the contest. Being desperately wounded, and thinking his end approaching, he had confessed to an attending father of the inquisition, that he was the sole cause of the alchemist's condemnation, and that the evidence on which it was grounded was altogether false. The testimony of Don Antonio came in corroboration of this avowal; and his relationship to the grand inquisitor had, in all probability, its proper weight. Thus was the poor alchemist snatched, in a manner, from the very flames: and so great had been the sympathy awakened in his case, that for once a populace rejoiced at being disappointed of an execution.

The residue of the story may readily be imagined by every one versed in this valuable kind of history. Don Antonio espoused the lovely Inez, and took her and her father with him to Valencia. As she had been a loving and dutiful daughter, so she proved a true and tender wife. It was not long before Don Antonio succeeded to his father's titles and estates, and he and his fair spouse were renowned for being the handsomest and happiest couple in all Valencia.

As to Don Ambrosio, he partially recovered to the enjoyment of a broken constitution and a blasted name, and hid his remorse and disgraces in a convent; while the poor victim of his arts, who had assisted Inez in her escape, unable to conquer the early passion that he had awakened in her bosom, though convinced of the baseness of the object, retired from the world, and became a humble sister in a nunnery.

The worthy alchemist took up his abode with his children. A pavilion, in the garden of their palace, was assigned to him as a laboratory, where he resumed his researches, with renovated ardour, after the grand secret. He was now and then assisted by his son-in-law; but the latter slackened grievously in his zeal and diligence after marriage. Still he would listen with profound gravity and attention to the old man's rhapsodies, and his quotations from Paracelsus, Sandivogius, and Pietro D'Abano, which daily grew longer and longer. In this way the good alchemist lived on, quietly and comfortably, to what

is called a good old age, that is to say, an age that is good for nothing, and, unfortunately for mankind, was hurried out of life in his ninetyeth year, just as he was on the point of discovering the Philosopher's Stone.

Such was the story of the captain's friend, with which we whiled away the morning. The captain was, every now and then, interrupted by questions and remarks, which I have not mentioned, lest I should break the continuity of the tale. He was a little disturbed also, once or twice, by the general, who fell asleep, and breathed rather hard, to the great horror and annoyance of Lady Lillycraft. In a long and tender love-scene, also, which was particularly to her ladyship's taste, the unlucky general, having his head a little sunk upon his breast, kept making a sound at regular intervals, very much like the word *pish*, long drawn out. At length he made an odd, abrupt, guttural sound, that suddenly awoke him; he hemmed, looked about with a slight degree of consternation, and then began to play with her ladyship's work-bag, which, however, she rather pettishly withdrew. The steady sound of the captain's voice was still too potent a soporific for the poor general; he kept gleaming up and sinking in the socket, until the cessation of the tale again aroused him, when he started awake, put his foot down upon Lady Lillycraft's cur, the sleeping Beauty, which yelped, and seized him by the leg, and, in a moment, the whole library resounded with yelpings and exclamations. Never did a man more completely mar his fortunes while he was asleep. Silence being at length restored, the company expressed their thanks to the captain, and gave various opinions of the story. The parson's mind, I found, had been continually running upon the leaden manuscripts, mentioned in the beginning, as dug up at Grenada, and he put several eager questions to the captain on the subject. The general could not well make out the drift of the story, but thought it a little confused. "I am glad, however," said he, "that they burnt the old chap of the tower; I have no doubt he was a notorious impostor."

ENGLISH COUNTRY GENTLEMEN.

His certain life, that never can deceive him,
Is full of thousand sweets and rich content;
The smooth-leaved beeches in the field receive him
With coolest shade, till noontide's heat be spent.

His life is neither tost in boisterous seas
Or the vexatious world; or lost in slothful ease.
Pleased and full blest he lives when he his God can please.
PRINEAS FLETCHER.

I TAKE great pleasure in accompanying the squire in his perambulations about his estate, in which he is often attended by a kind of cabinet council. His prime minister, the steward, is a very worthy and honest old man, that assumes a right of way; that is to say, a right to have his own way, from having lived time out of mind on the place. He loves the estate even better than he does the squire; and thwarts the latter sadly in many of his projects of improvement, being a little prone to disapprove of every plan that does not originate with himself.

In the course of one of these perambulations, I have known the squire to point out some important alteration which he was contemplating, in the disposition or cultivation of the grounds; this of course would be opposed by the steward, and a long argument would ensue over a stile, or on a rising piece of ground, until the squire, who has a high opinion of the other's ability and integrity, would be fain to give up the point. This concession, I observed, would immediately mollify the old man, and, after walking over a field or two in silence, with his hands behind his back, chewing the cud of reflection, he would suddenly turn to the squire and observe, that "he had been turning the matter over in his mind, and, upon the whole, he believed he would take his honour's advice."

Christy, the huntsman, is another of the squire's occasional attendants, to whom he continually refers in all matters of local history, as to a chronicle of the estate, having, in a manner, been acquainted with many of the trees, from the very time that they were acorns. Old Nimrod, as has been shown, is rather pragmatical in those points of knowledge on which he values himself; but the squire rarely contradicts him, and is, in fact, one of the most indulgent potentates that ever was henpecked by his ministry.

He often laughs about it himself, and evidently yields to these old men more from the bent of his own humour, than from any want of proper authority. He likes this honest independence of old age, and is well aware that these trusty followers love and honour him in their hearts. He is perfectly at ease about his own dignity and the respect of those around him; nothing disgusts him sooner than any appearance of fawning or sycophancy.

I really have seen no display of royal state that could compare with one of the squire's progresses about his paternal fields and through his hereditary woodlands, with several of these faithful adherents about him, and followed by a body-guard of dogs. He encourages a frankness and manliness of deportment among his dependents, and is the personal friend of his tenants; inquiring into their concerns, and assisting them in times of difficulty and hardship. This has rendered him one of the most popular, and of course one of the happiest of landlords.

Indeed, I do not know a more enviable condition of life, than that of an English gentleman, of sound judgment and good feelings, who passes the greater part of his time on an hereditary estate in the country. From the excellence of the roads and the rapidity and exactness of the public conveyances, he is enabled to command all the comforts and conveniences, all the intelligence and novelties of the capital, while he is removed from its hurry and distraction. He has ample means of occupation and amusement within his own domains; he may diversify his time by rural occupations, by rural sports, by study, and by the delights of friendly society, collected within his own hospitable halls.

Or, if his views and feelings are of a more extensive and liberal nature, he has it greatly in his power to do good, and to have that good immediately reflected back upon himself. He can render essential service to his country, by assisting in the disinterested administration of the laws; by watching over the opinions and principles of the lower orders around him; by diffusing among them those lights which may be important to their welfare; by mingling frankly among them, gaining their confidence, becoming the immediate auditor of their complaints, informing himself of their wants, making himself a channel through which their grievances may be quietly communicated to the proper sources of mitigation and relief; or by becoming, if need be, the intrepid and incorruptible guardian of their liberties—the enlightened champion of their rights.

All this, it appears to me, can be done without any sacrifice of personal dignity, without any degrading arts of popularity, without any truckling to vulgar prejudices, or concurrence in vulgar clamour; but by the steady influence of sincere and friendly counsel, of fair, upright, and generous deportment. Whatever may be said of English mobs and English dema-

gogues, I have never met with a people more open to reason, more considerate in their tempers, more tractable by argument in the roughest times, than the English. They are remarkably quick at discerning and appreciating whatever is manly and honourable. They are by nature and habit methodical and orderly; and they feel the value of all that is regular and respectable. They may occasionally be deceived by sophistry, and excited into turbulence by public distresses and the misrepresentations of designing men; but open their eyes, and they will eventually rally round the land-marks of steady truth and deliberate good sense. They are fond of established customs,—they are fond of long established names; and that love of order and quiet, which characterizes the nation, gives a vast influence to the descendants of the old families, whose forefathers have been lords of the soil from time immemorial.

It is when the rich, and well-educated, and highly privileged classes neglect their duties, when they neglect to study the interests, and conciliate the affections, and instruct the opinions, and champion the rights of the people, that the latter become discontented and turbulent, and fall into the hands of demagogues: the demagogue always steps in where the patriot is wanting. There is a common high-handed cant among the high-fed, and, as they fancy themselves, high-minded men, about putting down the mob; but all true physicians know that it is better to sweeten the blood than attack the tumour, to apply the emollient rather than the cautery. It is absurd in a country like England, where there is so much freedom, and such a jealousy of right, for any man to assume an aristocratical tone, and to talk superciliously of the common people. There is no rank that makes him independent of the opinions and affections of his fellow-men; there is no rank nor distinction that severs him from his fellow-subject; and if, by any gradual neglect or assumption on the one side, and discontent and jealousy on the other, the orders of society should really separate, let those who stand on the eminence beware that the chasm is not mining at their feet. The orders of society in all well constituted governments are mutually bound together, and important to each other; there can be no such thing in a free government as a vacuum; and whenever one is likely to take place, by the drawing off of the rich and intelligent from the poor, the bad passions of society will rush in to fill up the space, and rend the whole asunder.

Though born and brought up in a republic, and more and

more confirmed in republican principles by every year's observation and experience, yet I am not insensible to the excellence that may exist in other forms of government, nor to the fact that they may be more suitable to the situation and circumstances of the countries in which they exist: I have endeavoured rather to look at them as they are, and to observe how they are calculated to effect the end which they propose. Considering, therefore, the mixed nature of the government of this country, and its representative form, I have looked with admiration at the manner in which the wealth, and influence, and intelligence were spread over its whole surface; not, as in some monarchies, drained from the country, and collected in towns and cities. I have considered the great rural establishments of the nobility, and the lesser establishments of the gentry, as so many reservoirs of wealth and intelligence distributed about the kingdom, apart from the towns, to irrigate, freshen, and fertilize the surrounding country. I have looked upon them, too, as the august retreats of patriots and statesmen, where, in the enjoyment of honourable independence and elegant leisure, they might train up their minds to appear in those legislative assemblies, whose debates and decisions form the study and precedents of other nations, and involve the interests of the world.

I have been both surprised and disappointed, therefore, at finding, that, on this subject, I was often indulging in an Utopian dream, rather than a well-founded opinion. I have been concerned at finding that these fine estates were too often involved and mortgaged, or placed in the hands of creditors, and the owners exiled from their paternal lands. There is an extravagance, I am told, that runs parallel with wealth; a lavish expenditure among the great; a senseless competition among the aspiring; a heedless, joyous dissipation, among all the upper ranks, that often beggars even these splendid establishments, breaks down the pride and principles of their possessors, and makes too many of them mere place-hunters, or shifting absentees. It is thus that so many are thrown into the hands of government; and a court, which ought to be the most pure and honourable in Europe, is so often degraded by noble, but importunate time-servers. It is thus, too, that so many become exiles from their native land, crowding the hotels of foreign countries, and expending upon thankless strangers the wealth so hardly drained from their laborious peasantry. I have looked upon these latter

with a mixture of censure and concern. Knowing the almost bigoted fondness of an Englishman for his native home, I can conceive what must be their compunction and regret, when, amidst the sunburnt plains of France, they call to mind the green fields of England; the hereditary groves which they have abandoned, and the hospitable roof of their fathers, which they have left desolate, or to be inhabited by strangers. But retrenchment is no plea for an abandonment of country. They have risen with the prosperity of the land; let them abide its fluctuations, and conform to its fortunes. It is not for the rich to fly because the country is suffering; let them share, in their relative proportion, the common lot; they owe it to the land that has elevated them to honour and affluence. When the poor have to diminish their scanty morsel of bread; when they have to compound with the cravings of nature, and study with how little they can do, and not be starved; it is not then for the rich to fly, and diminish still further the resources of the poor, that they themselves may live in splendour in a cheaper country. Let them rather retire to their estates, and there practise retrenchment. Let them return to that noble simplicity, that practical good sense, that honest pride, which form the foundation of true English character, and from them they may again rear the edifice of fair and honourable prosperity.

On the rural habits of the English nobility and gentry; on the manner in which they discharge their duties on their patrimonial possessions, depend greatly the virtue and welfare of the nation. So long as they pass the greater part of their time in the quiet and purity of the country; surrounded by the monuments of their illustrious ancestors; surrounded by every thing that can inspire generous pride, noble emulation, and amiable and magnanimous sentiment; so long they are safe, and in them the nation may repose its interests and its honour. But the moment that they become the servile throngers of court avenues, and give themselves up to the political intrigues and heartless dissipations of the metropolis, that moment they lose the real nobility of their natures, and become the mere leeches of the country.

That the great majority of nobility and gentry in England are endowed with high notions of honour and independence, I thoroughly believe. They have evidenced it lately on very important questions, and have given an example of adherence to principle, in preference to party and power, that must

have astonished many of the venal and obsequious courts of Europe. Such are the glorious effects of freedom, when infused into a constitution. But it seems to me that they are apt to forget the positive nature of their duties, and to fancy that their eminent privileges are only so many means of self-indulgence. They should recollect that, in a constitution like that of England, the titled orders are intended to be as useful as they are ornamental, and it is their virtues alone that can render them both. Their duties are divided between the sovereign and the subject; surrounding and giving lustre and dignity to the throne, and at the same time tempering and mitigating its rays, until they are transmitted in mild and genial radiance to the people. Born to leisure and opulence, they owe the exercise of their talents, and the expenditure of their wealth, to their native country. They may be compared to the clouds, which, being drawn up by the sun, and elevated in the heavens, reflect and magnify his splendour; while they repay the earth, from which they derive their sustenance, by returning their treasures to its bosom in fertilizing showers.

A BACHELOR'S CONFESSIONS.

I'll have a private, pensive, single life.

THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

I was sitting in my room a morning or two since, reading, when some one tapped at the door, and Master Simon entered. He had an unusually fresh appearance; he had put on a bright green riding-coat, with a bunch of violets in the button-hole, and had the air of an old bachelor trying to rejuvenate himself. He had not, however, his usual briskness and vivacity, but loitered about the room with somewhat of absence of manner, humming the old song,—“Go, lovely rose, tell her that wastes her time and me;” and then, leaning against the window, and looking upon the landscape, he uttered a very audible sigh. As I had not been accustomed to see Master Simon in a pensive mood, I thought there might be some vexation preying on his mind, and I endeavoured to introduce a cheerful strain of conversation; but he was not in the vein to follow it up, and proposed that we should take a walk.

It was a beautiful morning, of that soft vernal temperature, that seems to thaw all the frost out of one's blood, and to set all nature in a ferment. The very fishes felt its influence:

the cautious trout ventured out of his dark hole to seek his mate, the roach and the dace rose up to the surface of the brook to bask in the sunshine, and the amorous frog piped from among the rushes. If ever an oyster can really fall in love, as has been said or sung, it must be on such a morning.

The weather certainly had its effect even upon Master Simon, for he seemed obstinately bent upon the pensive mood. Instead of stepping briskly along, smacking his dog-whip, whistling quaint ditties, or telling sporting anecdotes, he leaned on my arm, and talked about the approaching nuptials; from whence he made several digressions upon the character of womankind, touched a little upon the tender passion, and made sundry very excellent, though rather trite, observations upon disappointments in love. It was evident that he had something on his mind which he wished to impart, but felt awkward in approaching it. I was curious to see to what this strain would lead; but I was determined not to assist him. Indeed, I mischievously pretended to turn the conversation, and talked of his usual topics, dogs, horses, and hunting; but he was very brief in his replies, and invariably got back, by hook or by crook, into the sentimental vein.

At length we came to a clump of trees that overhung a whispering brook, with a rustic bench at their feet. The trees were grievously scored with letters and devices, which had grown out of all shape and size by the growth of the bark: and it appeared that this grove had served as a kind of register of the family loves from time immemorial. Here Master Simon made a pause, pulled up a tuft of flowers, threw them one by one into the water, and at length, turning somewhat abruptly upon me, asked me if ever I had been in love. I confess the question startled me a little, as I am not over fond of making confessions of my amorous follies; and, above all, should never dream of choosing my friend Master Simon for a confidant. He did not wait, however, for a reply; the inquiry was merely a prelude to a confession on his own part, and after several circumlocutions and whimsical preambles, he fairly disburthened himself of a very tolerable story of his having been crossed in love.

The reader will, very probably, suppose that it related to the gay widow who jilted him not long since at Doncaster races;—no such thing. It was about a sentimental passion that he once had for a most beautiful young lady, who wrote

poetry and played on the harp. He used to serenade her; and indeed he described several tender and gallant scenes, in which he was evidently picturing himself in his mind's eye as some elegant hero of romance, though, unfortunately for the tale, I only saw him as he stood before me, a dapper little old bachelor, with a face like an apple that has dried with the bloom on it.

What were the particulars of this tender tale I have already forgotten; indeed I listened to it with a heart like a very pebble stone, having hard work to repress a smile while Master Simon was putting on the amorous swain, uttering every now and then a sigh, and endeavouring to look sentimental and melancholy.

All that I recollect is, that the lady, according to his account, was certainly a little touched; for she used to accept all the music that he copied for her harp, and all the patterns that he drew for her dresses; and he began to flatter himself, after a long course of delicate attentions, that he was gradually fanning up a gentle flame in her heart, when she suddenly accepted the hand of a rich, boisterous, fox-hunting baronet, without either music or sentiment, who carried her by storm, after a fortnight's courtship.

Master Simon could not help concluding by some observation upon "modest merit," and the power of gold over the sex. As a remembrance of his passion, he pointed out a heart carved on the bark of one of the trees; but which, in the process of time, had grown out into a large excrescence; and he showed me a lock of her hair, which he wore in a true lover's knot, in a large gold brooch.

I have seldom met with an old bachelor that had not, at some time or other, his nonsensical moment, when he would become tender and sentimental, talk about the concerns of the heart, and have some confession of a delicate nature to make. Almost every man has some little trait of romance in his life, which he looks back to with fondness, and about which he is apt to grow garrulous occasionally. He recollects himself as he was at the time, young and gamesome; and forgets that his hearers have no other idea of the hero of the tale, but such as he may appear at the time of telling it; peradventure, a withered, whimsical, spindle-shanked old gentleman. With married men, it is true, this is not so frequently the case; their amorous romance is apt to decline after marriage; why, I cannot for the life of me imagine; but with a bachelor,

though it may slumber, it never dies. It is always liable to break out again in transient flashes, and never so much as on a spring morning in the country; or on a winter evening, when seated in his solitary chamber, stirring up the fire and talking of matrimony.

The moment that Master Simon had gone through his confession, and, to use the common phrase, "had made a clean breast of it," he became quite himself again. He had settled the point which had been worrying his mind, and doubtless considered himself established as a man of sentiment in my opinion. Before we had finished our morning's stroll, he was singing as blithe as a grasshopper, whistling to his dogs, and telling droll stories; and I recollect that he was particularly facetious that day at dinner on the subject of matrimony, and uttered several excellent jokes, not to be found in Joe Miller, that made the bride-elect blush and look down, but set all the old gentlemen at the table in a roar, and absolutely brought tears into the general's eyes.

ENGLISH GRAVITY.

Merrie England ! ANCIENT PHRASE.

THERE is nothing so rare as for a man to ride his hobby without molestation. I find the squire has not so undisturbed an indulgence in his humours as I had imagined, but has been repeatedly thwarted of late, and has suffered a kind of well-meaning persecution from a Mr. Faddy, an old gentleman of some weight, at least of purse, who has recently moved into the neighbourhood. He is a worthy and substantial manufacturer, who, having accumulated a large fortune by dint of steam-engines and spinning-jennies, has retired from business, and set up for a country gentleman. He has taken an old country seat and refitted it; and painted and plastered it, until it looks not unlike his own manufactory. He has been particularly careful in mending the walls and hedges, and putting up notices of spring-guns and man-traps in every part of his premises. Indeed, he shows great jealousy about his territorial rights, having stopped up a foot-path that led across his fields; and given warning, in staring letters, that whoever should be found trespassing on those grounds would be prosecuted with the utmost rigour of the law. He has brought into the country with him all the practical maxims of town, and the bustling habits of business; and is one of those sen-

sible, useful, prosing, troublesome, intolerable old gentlemen, that go about wearying and worrying society with excellent plans for public utility.

He is very much disposed to be on intimate terms with the squire, and calls on him, every now and then, with some project for the good of the neighbourhood, which happens to run diametrically opposite to some one or other of the squire's peculiar notions; but which is "too sensible a measure" to be openly opposed. He has annoyed him excessively by enforcing the vagrant laws, persecuting the gipsies, and endeavouring to suppress country wakes and holiday games, which he considers great nuisances, and reprobates as causes of the deadly sin of idleness.

There is evidently in all this a little of the ostentation of newly-acquired confidence; the tradesman is gradually swelling into the aristocrat; and he begins to grow excessively intolerant of every thing that is not genteel. He has a great deal to say about "the common people;" talks much of his park, his preserves, and the necessity of enforcing the game laws more strictly; and makes frequent use of the phrase, "the gentry of the neighbourhood."

He came to the Hall lately, with a face full of business, that he and the squire, to use his own words, "might lay their heads together," to hit upon some mode of putting a stop to the frolicking at the village on the approaching May-Day. It drew, he said, idle people together from all parts of the neighbourhood, who spent the day fiddling, dancing, and carousing, instead of staying at home to work for their families.

Now, as the squire, unluckily, is at the bottom of these May-Day revels, it may be supposed that the suggestions of the sagacious Mr. Faddy were not received with the best grace in the world. It is true, the old gentleman is too courteous to show any temper to a guest in his own house, but no sooner was he gone than the indignation of the squire found vent, at having his poetical cobwebs invaded by this buzzing blue-bottle fly of traffic. In his warmth he inveighed against the whole race of manufacturers, who, I found, were sore disturbers of his comfort. "Sir," said he, with emotion, "it makes my heart bleed to see all our fine streams dammed up and bestrid by cotton-mills; our valleys smoking with steam-engines, and the din of the hammer and the loom scaring away all our rural delights. What's to become of merry old England, when its manor-houses are all turned

into manufactories, and its sturdy peasantry into pin-makers and stocking-weavers? I have looked in vain for merry Sherwood, and all the greenwood haunts of Robin Hood; the whole country is covered with manufacturing towns. I have stood on the ruins of Dudley Castle, and looked round, with an aching heart, on what were once its feudal domains of verdant and beautiful country. Sir, I beheld a mere Campus Phlegreus; a region of fire; reeking with coal-pits, and furnaces, and smelting-houses, vomiting forth flames and smoke. The pale and ghastly people, toiling among vile exhalations, looked more like demons than human beings; the clanking wheels and engines, seen through the murky atmosphere, looked like instruments of torture in this pandemonium. What is to become of the country with these evils rankling in its very core? Sir, these manufacturers will be the ruin of our rural manners; they will destroy the national character; they will not leave materials for a single line of poetry!"

The squire is apt to wax eloquent on such themes; and I could hardly help smiling at this whimsical lamentation over national industry and public improvement. I am told, however, that he really grieves at the growing spirit of trade, as destroying the charm of life. He considers every new short-hand mode of doing things, as an inroad of snug, sordid method; and thinks that this will soon become a mere matter-of-fact world, where life will be reduced to a mathematical calculation of conveniences, and every thing will be done by steam.

He maintains also, that the nation has declined in its free and joyous spirit in proportion as it has turned its attention to commerce and manufactures; and that in old times, when England was an idler, it was also a merrier little island. In support of this opinion, he adduces the frequency and splendour of ancient festivals and merry-makings, and the hearty spirit with which they were kept up by all classes of people. His memory is stored with the accounts given by Stow, in his Survey of London, of the holiday revels at the Inns of Court, the Christmas mummeries, and the maskings and bon-fires about the streets. London, he says, in those days, resembled the continental cities in its picturesque manners and amusements. The court used to dance after dinner on public occasions. After the coronation dinner of Richard II., for example, the king, the prelates, the nobles, the knights, and the rest of the company, danced in Westminster Hall to the music of the minstrels. The example of the court was

followed by the middling classes, and so down to the lowest, and the whole nation was a dancing, jovial nation. He quotes a city picture of the times, given by Stow, which resembles the lively scenes one may often see in the gay city of Paris; for he tells us that on holidays, after evening prayers, the maidens in London used to assemble before the door in sight of their masters and dames, and while one played on a timbrel, the others danced for garlands, hanged athwart the street.

"Where will we meet with such merry groups now-a-days?" the squire will exclaim, shaking his head mournfully;—"and then as to the gaiety that prevailed in dress throughout all ranks of society, and made the very streets so fine and picturesque. 'I have myself,' says Gervais Markham, 'met an ordinary tapster in his silk stockings, garters deep fringed with gold lace, the rest of his apparel suitable, with cloak lined with velvet!' Nashe, too, who wrote in 1593, exclaims at the finery of the nation. 'England, the players' stage of gorgeous attire, the ape of all nations' superfluities, the continual masquer in outlandish habiliments.'"

Such are a few of the authorities quoted by the squire by way of contrasting what he supposes to have been the former vivacity of the nation with its present monotonous character. "John Bull," he will say, "was then a gay cavalier, with a sword by his side and a feather in his cap; but he is now a plodding citizen, in snuff-coloured coat and gaiters."

By the by, there really appears to have been some change in the national character since the days of which the squire is so fond of talking; those days when this little island acquired its favourite old title of "Merry England." This may be attributed in part to the growing hardships of the times, and the necessity of turning the whole attention to the means of subsistence; but England's gayest customs prevailed at times when her common people enjoyed comparatively few of the comforts and conveniences that they do at present. It may be still more attributed to the universal spirit of gain, and the calculating habits that commerce has introduced; but I am inclined to attribute it chiefly to the gradual increase of the liberty of the subject, and the growing freedom and activity of opinion.

A free people are apt to be grave and thoughtful. They have high and important matters to occupy their minds. They feel that it is their right, their interest, and their duty to mingle in public concerns, and to watch over the general

welfare. The continual exercise of the mind on political topics gives intenser habits of thinking and a more serious and earnest demeanour. A nation becomes less gay, but more intellectually happy and vigorous. It evinces less play of the fancy, but more power of the imagination; less taste and elegance, but more grandeur of mind; less animated vivacity, but deeper enthusiasm.

It is when men are shut out of the regions of manly thought by a despotic government; when every grave and lofty theme is rendered perilous to discussion and almost to reflection; it is then that they turn to the safer occupation of taste and amusement; trifles rise to importance, and occupy the craving activity of intellect. No being is more void of care and reflection than the slave; none dances more gaily in his intervals of labour; but make him free, give him rights and interests to guard, and he becomes thoughtful and laborious.

The French are a gayer people than the English. Why? Partly from temperament, perhaps; but greatly because they have been accustomed to governments which surrounded the free exercise of thought with danger, and where he only was safe who shut his eyes and ears to public events, and enjoyed the passing pleasure of the day. Within late years they have had more opportunity of exercising their minds; and within late years the national character has essentially changed. Never did the French enjoy such a degree of freedom as they do at this moment; and at this moment the French are comparatively a grave people.

GIPSIES.

What's that to absolute freedom, such as the very beggars have; to feast and revel here to-day, and yonder to-morrow; next day where they please; and so on still, the whole country or kingdom over? There's liberty! the birds of the air can take no more.

JOVIAL CREW.

SINCE the meeting with the gipsies, which I have related in a former paper, I have observed several of them haunting the purlieus of the Hall, in spite of a positive interdiction of the squire. They are part of a gang that has long kept about this neighbourhood, to the great annoyance of the farmers, whose poultry yards often suffer from their nocturnal invasions. They are, however, in some measure, patronised by the squire, who considers the race as belonging to the good

old times; which, to confess the private truth, seem to have abounded with good-for-nothing characters.

This roving crew is called "Star-light Tom's Gang," from the name of its chieftain, a notorious poacher. I have heard repeatedly of the misdeeds of this "minion of the moon;" for every midnight depredation that takes place in park, or fold, or farm-yard, is laid to his charge. Star-light Tom, in fact, answers to his name; he seems to walk in darkness, and, like a fox, to be traced in the morning by the mischief he has done. He reminds me of that fearful personage in the nursery rhyme:

"Who goes round the house at night?

None but bloody Tom!

Who steals all the sheep at night?

None but one by one!"

In short, Star-light Tom is the scape-goat of the neighbourhood; but so cunning and adroit, that there is no detecting him. Old Christy and the gamekeeper have watched many a night in hopes of entrapping him; and Christy often patrols the park with his dogs, for the purpose, but all in vain. It is said that the squire winks hard at his misdeeds, having an indulgent feeling towards the vagabond, because of his being very expert at all kinds of games, a great shot with the cross-bow, and the best morris dancer in the country.

The squire also suffers the gang to lurk unmolested about the skirts of his estate, on condition that they do not come about the house. The approaching wedding, however, has made a kind of Saturnalia at the Hall, and has caused a suspension of all sober rule. It has produced a great sensation throughout the female part of the household; not a house-maid but dreams of wedding favours, and has a husband running in her head. Such a time is a harvest for the gipsies: there is a public footpath leading across one part of the park, by which they have free ingress, and they are continually hovering about the grounds, telling the servant girls' fortunes, or getting smuggled in to the young ladies.

I believe the Oxonian amuses himself very much by furnishing them with hints in private, and bewildering all the weak brains in the house with their wonderful revelations. The general certainly was very much astonished by the communications made to him the other evening by the gipsy girl: he kept a wary silence towards us on the subject, and affected to treat it lightly; but I have noticed that he has since redoubled his attentions to Lady Lillycraft and her dogs.

I have seen also Phœbe Wilkins, the housekeeper's pretty and love-sick mece, holding a long conference with one of these old sibyls behind a large tree in the avenue, and often looking round to see that she was not observed. I make no doubt that she was endeavouring to get some favourable augury about the result of her love quarrel with young Ready-Money, as oracles have always been more consulted on love affairs than upon any thing else. I fear, however, that in this instance the response was not so favourable as usual, for I perceived poor Phœbe returning pensively towards the house; her head hanging down, her hat in her hand, and the riband trailing along the ground.

At another time, as I turned a corner of a terrace, at the bottom of the garden, just by a clump of trees, and a large stone urn, I came upon a bevy of the young girls of the family, attended by this same Phœbe Wilkins. I was at a loss to comprehend the meaning of their blushing and giggling, and their apparent agitation, until I saw the red cloak of a gipsy vanishing among the shrubbery. A few moments after, I caught sight of Master Simon and the Oxonian stealing along one of the walks of the garden, chuckling and laughing at their successful waggery; having evidently put the gipsy up to the thing, and instructed her what to say.

After all, there is something strangely pleasing in these tamperings with the future, even where we are convinced of the fallacy of the prediction. It is singular how willingly the mind will half deceive itself, and with what a degree of awe we will listen even to these babblers about futurity. For my part, I cannot feel angry with these poor vagabonds, that seek to deceive us into bright hopes and expectations. I have always been something of a castle-builder, and have found my liveliest pleasures to arise from the illusions which fancy has cast over common-place realities. As I get on in life, I find it more difficult to deceive myself in this delightful manner; and I should be thankful to any prophet, however false, that would conjure the clouds which hang over futurity into palaces, and all its doubtful regions into fairy-land.

The squire, who, as I have observed, has a private goodwill towards gipsies, has suffered considerable annoyance on their account. Not that they requite his indulgence with ingratitude, for they do not depredate very flagrantly on his estate; but because their pilferings and misdeeds occasion loud murmurs in the village. I can readily understand the

old gentleman's humour on this point; I have a great toleration for all kinds of vagrant, sunshiny existence, and must confess I take a pleasure in observing the ways of gipsies. The English, who are accustomed to them from childhood, and often suffer from their petty depredations, consider them as mere nuisances; but I have been very much struck with their peculiarities. I like to behold their clear olive complexions, their romantic black eyes, their raven locks, their lithe, slender figures, and to hear them, in low, silver tones, dealing forth magnificent promises of honours and estates, of world's worth, and ladies' love.

Their mode of life, too, has something in it very fanciful and picturesque. They are the free denizens of nature, and maintain a primitive independence, in spite of law and gospel; of county gaols and country magistrates. It is curious to see the obstinate adherence to the wild, unsettled habits of savage life transmitted from generation to generation, and preserved in the midst of one of the most cultivated, populous, and systematic countries in the world. They are totally distinct from the busy, thrifty people about them. They seem to be like the Indians of America, either above or below the ordinary cares and anxieties of mankind. Heedless of power, of honours, of wealth; and indifferent to the fluctuations of the times, the rise or fall of grain, or stock, or empires, they seem to laugh at the toiling, fretting world around them, and to live according to the philosophy of the old song:

- “ Who would ambition shun,
 • And loves to lie i' the sun,
 Seeking the food he eats,
 And pleased with what he gets,
 Come hither, come hither, come hither;
 Here shall he see
 No enemy,
 But winter and rough weather.”

In this way they wander from county to county, keeping about the purlieus of villages, or in plenteous neighbourhoods, where there are fat farms and rich country seats. Their encampments are generally made in some beautiful spot; either a green shady nook of a road; or on the border of a common, under a sheltering hedge; or on the skirts of a fine spreading wood. They are always to be found lurking about fairs and races, and rustic gatherings, wherever there is pleasure, and throng, and idleness. They are the oracles of milk maids and simple serving girls; and sometimes have even the

honour of perusing the white hands of gentlemen's daughters, when rambling about their father's grounds. They are the bane of good housewives and thrifty farmers, and odious in the eyes of country justices; but, like all other vagabond beings, they have something to commend them to the fancy. They are among the last traces, in these matter-of-fact days, of the motley population of former times; and are whimsically associated in my mind with fairies and witches, Robin Good-Fellow, Robin Hood, and the other fantastical personages of poetry.

MAY-DAY CUSTOMS.

Happy the age, and harmlesse were the dayes
 (For then true love and amity was found)
 When every village did a May-pole raise,
 And Whitson-ales and May-games did abound:
 And all the lusty yonkers in a rout,
 With merry lasses daunc'd the rod about,
 Then friendship to their banquets bid the guests,
 And poore men far'd the better for their feasts.

PASQUIL'S PALINODIA.

THE month of April has nearly passed away, and we are fast approaching that poetical day, which was considered, in old times, as the boundary that parted the frontiers of winter and summer. With all its caprices, however, I like the month of April. I like these laughing and crying days, when sun and shade seem to run in billows over the landscape. I like to see the sudden shower coursing over the meadow, and giving all nature a greener smile, and the bright sunbeams chasing the flying cloud, and turning all its drops into diamonds.

I was enjoying a morning of the kind in company with the squire in one of the finest parts of the park. We were skirting a beautiful grove, and he was giving me a kind of biographical account of several of his favourite forest trees, when we heard the strokes of an axe from the midst of a thick copse. The squire paused and listened, with manifest signs of uneasiness. He turned his steps in the direction of the sound. The strokes grew louder and louder as we advanced; there was evidently a vigorous arm wielding the axe. The squire quickened his pace, but in vain; a loud crack and a succeeding crash told that the mischief had been done, and some child of the forest laid low. When w

came to the place, we found Master Simon and several others standing about a tall and beautifully straight young tree, which had just been felled.

The squire, though a man of most harmonious dispositions, was completely put out of tune by this circumstance. He felt like a monarch witnessing the murder of one of his liege subjects, and demanded, with some asperity, the meaning of the outrage. It turned out to be an affair of Master Simon's, who had selected the tree from its height and straightness, for a May-pole, the old one which stood on the village-green being unfit for further service. If anything could have soothed the ire of my worthy host, it would have been the reflection that this tree had fallen in so good a cause; and I saw that there was a great struggle between his fondness for his groves, and his devotion to May-Day. He could not contemplate the prostrate tree, however, without indulging in lamentation, and making a kind of funeral eulogy, like Mark Antony over the body of Cæsar; and he forbade that any tree should thenceforward be cut down on his estate without a warrant from himself; being determined, he said, to hold the sovereign power of life and death in his own hands.

This mention of the May-pole struck my attention, and I inquired whether the old customs connected with it were really kept up in this part of the country. The squire shook his head mournfully; and I found I had touched on one of his tender points, for he grew quite melancholy in bewailing the total decline of old May-Day. Though it is regularly celebrated in the neighbouring village, yet it has been merely resuscitated by the worthy squire, and is kept up in a forced state of existence at his expense. He meets with continual discouragements; and finds great difficulty in getting the country bumpkins to play their parts tolerably. He manages to have every year a "Queen of the May;" but as to Robin Hood, Friar Tuck, the Dragon, the Hobby Horse, and all the other motley crew that used to enliven the day with their mummery, he has not ventured to introduce them.

Still I look forward with some interest to the promised shadow of old May-Day, even though it be but a shadow; and I feel more and more pleased with the whimsical, yet harmless hobby of my host, which is surrounding him with agreeable associations, and making a little world of poetry about him. Brought up, as I have been, in a new country. I may appreciate too highly the faint vestiges of ancient cus-

toms which I now and then meet with, and the interest I express in them may provoke a smile from those who are negligently suffering them to pass away. But with whatever indifference they may be regarded by those "to the manner born," yet in my mind the lingering flavour of them imparts a charm to rustic life, which nothing else could readily supply.

I shall never forget the delight I felt on first seeing a May-pole. It was on the banks of the Dee, close by the picturesque old bridge that stretches across the river from the quaint little city of Chester. I had already been carried back into former days by the antiquities of that venerable place; the examination of which is equal to turning over the pages of a black-letter volume, or gazing on the pictures in Froissart. The May-pole on the margin of that poetic stream completed the illusion. My fancy adorned it with wreaths of flowers, and peopled the green bank with all the dancing revelry of May-Day. The mere sight of this May-pole gave a glow to my feelings, and spread a charm over the country for the rest of the day; and as I traversed a part of the fair plain of Cheshire, and the beautiful borders of Wales, and looked from among swelling hills down a long, green valley, through which the "Deva wound its wizard stream," my imagination turned all into a perfect Arcadia.

Whether it be owing to such poetical associations early instilled into my mind, or whether there is, as it were, a sympathetic revival and budding forth of the feelings at this season, certain it is, that I always experience, wherever I may be placed, a delightful expansion of the heart at the return of May. It is said that birds about this time will become restless in their cages, as if instinct with the season, conscious of the revelry that is going on in the groves, and impatient to break from their bondage, and join in the jubilee of the year. In like manner I have felt myself excited, even in the midst of the metropolis, when the windows, which had been churlishly closed all winter, were again thrown open to receive the balmy breath of May; when the sweets of the country were breathed into the town, and flowers were cried about the streets. I have considered the treasures of flowers thus poured in as so many missives from nature inviting us forth to enjoy the virgin beauty of the year, before its freshness is exhaled by the heats of sunny summer.

One can readily imagine what a gay scene it must have been in jolly old London, when the doors were decorated with

flowering branches, when every hat was decked with hawthorn, and Robin Hood, Friar Tuck, Maid Marian, the morris-dancers, and all the other fantastic masks and revellers, were performing their antics about the May-pole in every part of the city.

I am not a bigoted admirer of old times and old customs merely because of their antiquity. But while I rejoice in the decline of many of the rude usages and coarse amusements of former days, I cannot but regret that this innocent and fanciful festival has fallen into disuse. It seemed appropriate to this verdant and pastoral country, and calculated to light up the too pervading gravity of the nation. I value every custom that tends to infuse poetical feeling into the common people, and to sweeten and soften the rudeness of rustic manners, without destroying their simplicity. Indeed, it is to the decline of this happy simplicity that the decline of this custom may be traced; and the rural dance on the green, and the homely May-Day pageant have gradually disappeared, in proportion as the peasantry have become expensive and artificial in their pleasures, and too knowing for simple enjoyment.

Some attempts, the squire informs me, have been made of late years, by men of both taste and learning, to rally back the popular feeling to these standards of primitive simplicity; but the time has gone by, the feeling has become chilled by habits of gain and traffic, the country apes the manners and amusements of the town, and little is heard of May-Day at present, except from the lamentations of authors, who sigh after it from among the brick walls of the city:

“ For O, for O, the Hobby Horse is forgot.”

VILLAGE WORTHIES.

Nay, I tell you, I am so well beloved in our town, that not the worst dog in the street would hurt my little finger.

COLLIER OF CROYDON.

As the neighbouring village is one of those out-of-the-way, but gossiping little places, where a small matter makes a great stir, it is not to be supposed that the approach of a festival like that of May-Day can be regarded with indifference, especially since it is made a matter of such moment by the great folks at the Hall. Master Simon, who is the faithful factotum of the worthy squire, and jumps with his humour in everything, is frequent just now in his visits to the village, to

give directions for the impending fête; and as I have taken the liberty occasionally of accompanying him, I have been enabled to get some insight into the characters and internal politics of this very sagacious little community.

Master Simon is in fact the Cæsar of the village. It is true the squire is the protecting power, but his factotum is the active and busy agent. He intermeddles in all its concerns, is acquainted with all the inhabitants and their domestic history, gives counsel to the old folks in their business matters, and the young folks in their love affairs, and enjoys the proud satisfaction of being a great man in a little world.

He is the dispenser, too, of the squire's charity, which is bounteous; and, to do Master Simon justice, he performs this part of his functions with great alacrity. Indeed I have been entertained with the mixture of bustle, importance, and kind-heartedness which he displays. He is of too vivacious a temperament to comfort the afflicted by sitting down moping and whining and blowing noses in concert; but goes whisking about like a sparrow, chirping consolation into every hole and corner of the village. I have seen an old woman, in a red cloak, hold him for half an hour together with some long phthisical tale of distress, which Master Simon listened to with many a bob of the head, smack of his dog-whip, and other symptoms of impatience, though he afterwards made a most faithful and circumstantial report of the case to the squire. I have watched him, too, during one of his pop visits into the cottage of a superannuated villager, who is a pensioner of the squire, where he fidgeted about the room without sitting down, made many excellent off-hand reflections with the old invalid, who was propped up in his chair, about the shortness of life, the certainty of death, and the necessity of preparing for "that awful change;" quoted several texts of Scripture very incorrectly, but much to the edification of the cottager's wife; and on coming out pinched the daughter's rosy cheek, and wondered what was in the young men, that such a pretty face did not get a husband.

He has also his cabinet councillors in the village, with whom he is very busy just now, preparing for the May-Day ceremonies. Among these is the village tailor, a pale-faced fellow, that plays the clarionet in the church choir; and, being a great musical genius, has frequent meetings of the band at his house, where they "make night hideous" by their concerts. He is, in consequence, high in favour with Master

Simon; and, through his influence, has the making, or rather marring, of all the liveries of the Hall; which generally look as though they had been cut out by one of those scientific tailors of the Flying Island of Laputa, who took measure of their customers with a quadrant. The tailor, in fact, might rise to be one of the monied men of the village, was he not rather too prone to gossip, and keep holidays, and give concerts, and blow all his substance, real and personal, through his clarionet; which literally keeps him poor both in body and estate. He has for the present thrown by all his regular work, and suffered the breeches of the village to go unmade and unmended, while he is occupied in making garlands of party-coloured rags, in imitation of flowers, for the decoration of the May-pole.

Another of Master Simon's councillors is the apothecary, a short, and rather fat man, with a pair of prominent eyes, that diverge like those of a lobster. He is the village wise man; very sententious, and full of profound remarks on shallow subjects. Master Simon often quotes his sayings, and mentions him as rather an extraordinary man; and even consults him occasionally in desperate cases of the dogs and horses. Indeed he seems to have been overwhelmed by the apothecary's philosophy, which is exactly one observation deep, consisting of indisputable maxims, such as may be gathered from the mottoes of tobacco boxes. I had a specimen of his philosophy in my very first conversation with him; in the course of which he observed, with great solemnity and emphasis, that "man is a compound of wisdom and folly;" upon which Master Simon, who had hold of my arm, pressed very hard upon it, and whispered in my ear, "That's a devilish shrewd remark!"

THE SCHOOLMASTER.

There will no mosse stick to the stone of Sisiphus, no grasse hang on the heels of Mercury, no butter cleave on the bread of a traveller. For as the eagle at every flight loseth a feather, which maketh her bauld in her age, so the traveller in every country loseth some fleece, which maketh him a beggar in his youth, by buying that for a pound which he cannot sell again for a penny—repentance.

LILLY'S EUPHUES.

AMONG the worthies of the village, that enjoy the peculiar confidence of Master Simon, is one who has struck my fancy so much that I have thought him worthy of a separate notice.

It is Slingsby, the schoolmaster, a thin, elderly man, rather threadbare and slovenly, somewhat indolent in manner, and with an easy, good-humoured look, not often met with in his craft. I have been interested in his favour by a few anecdotes which I have picked up concerning him.

He is a native of the village, and was a contemporary and playmate of Ready-Money Jack in the days of their boyhood. Indeed, they carried on a kind of league of mutual good offices. Slingsby was rather puny, and withal somewhat of a coward, but very apt at his learning; Jack, on the contrary, was a bully-boy out of doors, but a sad laggard at his books. Slingsby helped Jack, therefore, to all his lessons; Jack fought all Slingsby's battles; and they were inseparable friends. This mutual kindness continued even after they left school, notwithstanding the dissimilarity of their characters. Jack took to ploughing and reaping, and prepared himself to till his paternal acres; while the other loitered negligently on in the path of learning, until he penetrated even into the confines of Latin and mathematics.

In an unlucky hour, however, he took to reading voyages and travels, and was smitten with a desire to see the world. This desire increased upon him as he grew up; so, early one bright, sunny morning, he put all his effects in a knapsack, slung it on his back, took staff in hand, and called in his way to take leave of his early schoolmate. Jack was just going out with the plough: the friends shook hands over the farm-house gate; Jack drove his team afield, and Slingsby whistled "over the hills, and far away," and sallied forth gaily to "seek his fortune."

Years and years passed by, and young Tom Slingsby was forgotten; when, one mellow Sunday afternoon in autumn, a thin man, somewhat advanced in life, with a coat out at elbows, a pair of old nankeen gaiters, and a few things tied in a handkerchief, and slung on the end of a stick, was seen loitering through the village. He appeared to regard several houses attentively, to peer into the windows that were open, to eye the villagers wistfully as they returned from church, and then to pass some time in the churchyard, reading the tombstones.

At length he found his way to the farm-house of Ready-Money Jack, but paused ere he attempted the wicket; contemplating the picture of substantial independence before him. In the porch of the house sat Ready-Money Jack, in his Sun-

day dress, with his hat upon his head, his pipe in his mouth, and his tankard before him, the monarch of all he surveyed. Beside him lay his fat house-dog. The varied sounds of poultry were heard from the well-stocked farm-yard; the bees hummed from their hives in the garden; the cattle lowed in the rich meadow; while the crammed barns and ample stacks bore proof of an abundant harvest.

The stranger opened the gate and advanced dubiously towards the house. The mastiff growled at the sight of the suspicious-looking intruder, but was immediately silenced by his master, who, taking his pipe from his mouth, awaited with inquiring aspect the address of this equivocal personage. The stranger eyed old Jack for a moment, so portly in his dimensions, and decked out in gorgeous apparel; then cast a glance upon his own threadbare and starveling condition, and the scanty bundle which he held in his hand; then giving his shrunk waistcoat a twitch to make it meet his receding waistband; and casting another look, half sad, half humorous, at the sturdy yeoman, "I suppose," said he, "Mr. Tibbets, you have forgot old times and old playmates?"

The latter gazed at him with scrutinizing look, but acknowledged that he had no recollection of him.

"Like enough, like enough," said the stranger; "everybody seems to have forgotten poor Slingsby?"

"Why, no sure! it can't be Tom Slingsby?"

"Yes, but it is, though!" replied the stranger, shaking his head.

Ready-Money Jack was on his feet in a twinkling; thrust out his hand, gave his ancient crony the gripe of a giant, and slapping the other hand on a bench, "Sit down there," cried he, "Tom Slingsby!"

A long conversation ensued about old times, while Slingsby was regaled with the best cheer that the farm-house afforded; for he was hungry as well as wayworn, and had the keen appetite of a poor pedestrian. The early playmates then talked over their subsequent lives and adventures. Jack had but little to relate, and was never good at a long story. A prosperous life, passed at home, has little incident for narrative; it is only poor devils, that are tossed about the world, that are the true heroes of story. Jack had stuck by the paternal farm, followed the same plough that his forefathers had driven, and had waxed richer and richer as he grew older. As to Tom Slingsby, he was an exemplification of the old

proverb, "A rolling stone gathers no moss." He had sought his fortune about the world, without ever finding it, being a thing oftener found at home than abroad. He had been in all kinds of situations, and had learnt a dozen different modes of making a living; but had found his way back to his native village rather poorer than when he left it, his knapsack having dwindled down to a scanty bundle.

As luck would have it, the squire was passing by the farmhouse that very evening, and called there, as is often his custom. He found the two schoolmates still gossiping in the porch, and, according to the good old Scottish song, "taking a cup of kindness yet, for auld lang syne." The squire was struck by the contrast in appearance and fortunes of these early playmates. Ready-Money Jack, seated in lordly state, surrounded by the good things of this life, with golden guineas hanging to his very watch chain, and the poor pilgrim Slingsby, thin as a weasel, with all his worldly effects, his bundle, hat, and walking-staff, lying on the ground beside him.

The good squire's heart warmed towards the luckless cosmopolite, for he is a little prone to like such half-vagrant characters. He cast about in his mind how he should contrive once more to anchor Slingsby in his native village. Honest Jack had already offered him a present shelter under his roof, in spite of the hints, and winks, and half remonstrances of the shrewd Dame Tibbets; but how to provide for his permanent maintenance was the question. Luckily the squire bethought himself that the village school was without a teacher. A little farther conversation convinced him that Slingsby was as fit for that as for anything else, and in a day or two he was seen swaying the rod of empire in the very school-house where he had often been horsed in the days of his boyhood.

Here he has remained for several years, and being honoured by the countenance of the squire, and the fast friendship of Mr. Tibbets, he has grown into much importance and consideration in the village. I am told, however, that he still shows, now and then, a degree of restlessness, and a disposition to rove abroad again, and see a little more of the world; an inclination which seems particularly to haunt him about spring-time. There is nothing so difficult to conquer as the vagrant humour, when once it has been fully indulged.

Since I have heard these anecdotes of poor Slingsby, I have more than once mused upon the picture presented by him and

his schoolmate Ready-Money Jack, on their coming together again after so long a separation. It is difficult to determine between lots in life, where each is attended with its peculiar discontents. He who never leaves his home repines at his monotonous existence, and envies the traveller, whose life is a constant tissue of wonder and adventure; while he, who is tossed about the world, looks back with many a sigh to the safe and quiet shore which he has abandoned. I cannot help thinking, however, that the man that stays at home, and cultivates the comforts and pleasures daily springing up around him, stands the best chance for happiness. There is nothing so fascinating to a young mind as the idea of travelling; and there is very witchcraft in the old phrase found in every nursery tale, of "going to seek one's fortune." A continual change of place, and change of object, promises a continual succession of adventure and gratification of curiosity. But there is a limit to all our enjoyments, and every desire bears its death in its very gratification. Curiosity languishes under repeated stimulants, novelties cease to excite surprise, until at length we cannot wonder even at a miracle. He who has sallied forth into the world, like poor Slingsby, full of sunny anticipations, finds too soon how different the distant scene becomes when visited. The smooth place roughens as he approaches; the wild place becomes tame and barren; the fairy tints that beguiled him on still fly to the distant hill, or gather upon the land he has left behind, and every part of the landscape seems greener than the spot he stands on.

THE SCHOOL.

But to come down from great men and higher matters to my little children and poor school-house again; I will, God willing, go forward orderly, as I proposed, to instruct children and young men both for learning and manners.

ROGER ASCHAM.

HAVING given the reader a slight sketch of the village schoolmaster, he may be curious to learn something concerning his school. As the squire takes much interest in the education of the neighbouring children, he put into the hands of the teacher, on first installing him in office, a copy of Roger Ascham's Schoolmaster, and advised him, moreover, to con over that portion of old Peachum which treats of the duty of masters, and which condemns the favourite method of making boys wise by flagellation

He exhorted Slingsby not to break down or depress the free spirit of the boys, by harshness and slavish fear, but to lead them freely and joyously on in the path of knowledge, making it pleasant and desirable in their eyes. He wished to see the youth trained up in the manners and habitudes of the peasantry of the good old times, and thus to lay the foundation for the accomplishment of his favourite object, the revival of old English customs and character. He recommended that all the ancient holidays should be observed, and that the sports of the boys, in their hours of play, should be regulated according to the standard authorities laid down by Strutt; a copy of whose invaluable work, decorated with plates, was deposited in the school-house. Above all, he exhorted the pedagogue to abstain from the use of birch, an instrument of instruction which the good squire regards with abhorrence, as fit only for the coercion of brute natures, that cannot be reasoned with.

Mr. Slingsby has followed the squire's instructions to the best of his disposition and abilities. He never flogs the boys, because he is too easy, good-humoured a creature to inflict pain on a worm. He is bountiful in holidays, because he loves holidays himself, and has a sympathy with the urchins' impatience of confinement, from having divers times experienced its irksomeness during the time that he was seeing the world. As to sports and pastimes, the boys are faithfully exercised in all that are on record,—quoits, races, prison-bars, tipcat, trap-ball, bandy-ball, wrestling, leaping, and what not. The only misfortune is, that having banished the birch, honest Slingsby has not studied Roger Ascham sufficiently to find out a substitute, or rather he has not the management in his nature to apply one; his school, therefore, though one of the happiest, is one of the most unruly in the country; and never was a pedagogue more liked, or less heeded, by his disciples than Slingsby.

He has lately taken a coadjutor worthy of himself, being another stray sheep that has returned to the village fold. This no other than the son of the musical tailor, who had bestowed some cost upon his education, hoping to see him one day arrive at the dignity of an exciseman, or at least of a parish clerk. The lad grew up, however, as idle and musical as his father; and, being captivated by the drum and fife of a recruiting party, he followed them off to the army. He returned not long since, out of money, and out at elbows, the

prodigal son of the village. He remained for some time lounging about the place in half-tattered soldier's dress, with a foraging cap on one side of his head, jerking stones across the brook, or loitering about the tavern door, a burthen to his father, and regarded with great coldness by all warm householders.

Something, however, drew honest Slingsby towards the youth. It might be the kindness he bore to his father, who is one of the schoolmaster's greatest cronies; it might be that secret sympathy, which draws men of vagrant propensities towards each other; for there is something truly magnetic in the vagabond feeling; or it might be, that he remembered the time when he himself had come back, like this youngster, a wreck to his native place. At any rate, whatever the motive, Slingsby drew towards the youth. They had many conversations in the village tap-room about foreign parts, and the various scenes and places they had witnessed during their wayfaring about the world. The more Slingsby talked with him, the more he found him to his taste, and finding him almost as learned as himself, he forthwith engaged him as an assistant, or usher in the school.

Under such admirable tuition, the school, as may be supposed, flourishes apace; and if the scholars do not become versed in all the holiday accomplishments of the good old times, to the squire's heart's content, it will not be the fault of their teachers. The prodigal son has become almost as popular among the boys as the pedagogue himself. His instructions are not limited to school hours; and having inherited the musical taste and talents of his father, he has bitten the whole school with the mania. He is a great hand at beating a drum, which is often heard rumbling from the rear of the school-house. He is teaching half the boys of the village, also, to play the fife, and the pandean pipes; and they weary the whole neighbourhood with their vague piping, as they sit perched on stiles, or loitering about the barn-doors in the evenings. Among the other exercises of the school, also, he has introduced the ancient art of archery, one of the squire's favourite themes, with such success, that the whippers roam in truant bands about the neighbourhood, practising with their bows and arrows upon the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field; and not unfrequently making a foray into the squire's domains, to the great indignation of the gamekeepers. In a word, so completely are the ancient English customs and habits cultivated at this school, that I

should not be surprised if the squire should live to see one of his poetic visions realized, and a brood reared up, worthy successors to Robin Hood, and his merry gang of outlaws.

A VILLAGE POLITICIAN.

I am a rogue if I do not think I was designed for the helm of state; I am so full of nimble stratagems, that I should have ordered affairs, and carried it against the stream of a faction, with as much ease as a skipper would laver against the wind.

THE GOBLINS.

IN one of my visits to the village with Master Simon, he proposed that we should stop at the inn, which he wished to show me, as a specimen of a real country inn, the headquarters of village gossip. I had remarked it before, in my perambulations about the place. It has a deep, old-fashioned porch, leading into a large hall, which serves for tap-room and travellers' room; having a wide fire-place, with high-backed settles on each side, where the wise men of the village gossip over their ale, and hold their sessions during the long winter evenings. The landlord is an easy, indolent fellow, shaped a little like one of his own beer barrels, and is apt to stand gossiping at his door, with his wig on one side, and his hands in his pockets, whilst his wife and daughter attend to customers. His wife, however, is fully competent to manage the establishment; and, indeed, from long habitude, rules over all the frequenters of the tap-room as completely as if they were her dependants instead of her patrons. Not a veteran ale-bibber but pays homage to her, having, no doubt, been often in her arrears. I have already hinted that she is on very good terms with Ready-Money Jack. He was a sweetheart of hers in early life, and has always countenanced the tavern on her account. Indeed, he is quite "the cock of the walk" at the tap-room.

As we approached the inn, we heard some one talking with great volubility, and distinguished the ominous words "taxes," "poor's rates," and "agricultural distress." It proved to be a thin, loquacious fellow, who had penned the landlord up in one corner of the porch, with his hands in his pockets as usual, listening with an air of the most vacant acquiescence.

The sight seemed to have a curious effect on Master Simon, as he squeezed my arm, and, altering his course, sheered

wide of the porch as though he had not had any idea of entering. This evident evasion induced me to notice the orator more particularly. He was meagre, but active in his make, with a long, pale, bilious face; a black, ill-shaven beard, a feverish eye, and a hat sharpened up at the sides, into a most pragmatistical shape. He had a newspaper in his hand, and seemed to be commenting on its contents, to the thorough conviction of mine host.

At sight of Master Simon the landlord was evidently a little flurried, and began to rub his hands, edge away from his corner, and make several profound publican bows; while the orator took no other notice of my companion than to talk rather louder than before, and with, as I thought, something of an air of defiance. Master Simon, however, as I have before said, sheered off from the porch, and passed on, pressing my arm within his, and whispering as we got by, in a tone of awe and horror, "That's a radical! he reads Cobbett!"

I endeavoured to get a more particular account of him from my companion, but he seemed unwilling even to talk about him, answering only in general terms, that he was "a cursed busy fellow, that had a confounded trick of talking, and was apt to bother one about the national debt, and such nonsense;" from which I suspected that Master Simon had been rendered wary of him by some accidental encounter on the field of argument: for these radicals are continually roving about in quest of wordy warfare, and never so happy as when they can tilt a gentleman logician out of his saddle.

On subsequent inquiry my suspicions have been confirmed. I find the radical has but recently found his way into the village, where he threatens to commit fearful devastations with his doctrines. He has already made two or three complete converts, or new lights; has shaken the faith of several others; and has grievously puzzled the brains of many of the oldest villagers, who had never thought about politics, or scarce anything else, during their whole lives.

He is lean and meagre from the constant restlessness of mind and body; worrying about with newspapers and pamphlets in his pockets, which he is ready to pull out on all occasions. He has shocked several of the staunchest villagers by talking lightly of the squire and his family; and hinting that it would be better the park should be cut up into small farms and kitchen gardens, or feed good mutton instead of worthless deer.

He is a great thorn in the side of the squire, who is sadly afraid that he will introduce politics into the village, and turn it into an unhappy, thinking community. He is a still greater grievance to Master Simon, who has hitherto been able to sway the political opinions of the place, without much cost of learning or logic; but has been very much puzzled of late to weed out the doubts and heresies already sown by this champion of reform. Indeed, the latter has taken complete command at the tap-room of the tavern, not so much because he has convinced, as because he has out-talked all the established oracles. The apothecary, with all his philosophy, was as nought before him. He has convinced and converted the landlord at least a dozen times; who, however, is liable to be convinced and converted the other way by the next person with whom he talks. It is true the radical has a violent antagonist in the landlady, who is vehemently loyal, and thoroughly devoted to the king, Master Simon, and the squire. She now and then comes out upon the reformer with all the fierceness of a cat-o'-mountain, and does not spare her own soft-headed husband, for listening to what she terms such "low-lived politics." What makes the good woman the more violent, is the perfect coolness with which the radical listens to her attacks, drawing his face up into a provoking supercilious smile; and when she has talked herself out of breath, quietly asking her for a taste of her home-brewed.

The only person who is in any way a match for this redoubtable politician is Ready-Money Jack, Tibbets who maintains his stand in the tap-room, in defiance of the radical and all his works. Jack is one of the most loyal men in the country, without being able to reason about the matter. He has that admirable quality for a tough arguer, also, that he never knows when he is beat. He has half-a-dozen old maxims, which he advances on all occasions, and though his antagonist may overturn them never so often, yet he always brings them anew into the field. He is like the robber in Ariosto, who, though his head might be cut off half a hundred times, yet whipped it on his shoulders again in a twinkling, and returned as sound a man as ever to the charge.

Whatever does not square with Jack's simple and obvious creed, he sets down for "French politics;" for, notwithstanding the peace, he cannot be persuaded that the French are not still laying plots to ruin the nation, and to get hold of the Bank of England. The radical attempted to overwhelm him

one day by a long passage from a newspaper; but Jack neither reads nor believes on newspapers. In reply he gave him one of the stanzas which he has by heart from his favourite, and indeed only author, old Tusser, and which he calls his Golden Rules:

Leave Princes' affairs undescanted on,
And tend to such doings as stand thee upon;
Fear God, and offend not the King nor his laws,
And keep thyself out of the magistrate's claws.

When Tibbets had pronounced this with great emphasis, he pulled out a well-filled leathern purse, took out a handful of gold and silver, paid his score at the bar with great punctuality, returned his money, piece by piece, into his purse, his purse into his pocket, which he buttoned up, and then giving his cudgel a stout thump upon the floor, and bidding the radical "Good morning, sir!" with the tone of a man who conceives he has completely done for his antagonist, he walked with lion-like gravity out of the house. Two or three of Jack's admirers who were present, and had been afraid to take the field themselves, looked upon this as a perfect triumph, and winked at each other when the radical's back was turned. "Ay, ay!" said mine host, as soon as the radical was out of hearing, "let old Jack alone; I'll warrant he'll give him his own!"

THE ROOKERY.

But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sublime
In still repeated circles, screaming loud,
The jay, the pie, and e'en the boding owl,
That hails the rising moon, have charms for me.

COWPER.

IN a grove of tall oaks and beeches, that crowns a terrace walk, just on the skirts of the garden, is an ancient rookery, which is one of the most important provinces in the squire's rural domains. The old gentleman sets great store by his rooks, and will not suffer one of them to be killed, in consequence of which they have increased amazingly; the tree tops are loaded with their nests; they have encroached upon the great avenue, and have even established, in times long past, a colony among the elms and pines of the churchyard, which, like other distant colonies, has already thrown off allegiance to the mother-country.

The rooks are looked upon by the squire as a very ancient and honourable line of gentry, highly aristocratical in their notions, fond of place, and attached to church and state; as their building so loftily, keeping about churches and cathedrals, and in the venerable groves of old castles and manor-houses, sufficiently manifests. The good opinion thus expressed by the squire put me upon observing more narrowly these very respectable birds; for I confess, to my shame, I had been apt to confound them with their cousins-german the crows, to whom, at the first glance, they bear so great a family resemblance. Nothing, it seems, could be more unjust or injurious than such a mistake. The rooks and crows are, among the feathered tribes, what the Spaniards and Portuguese are among nations, the least loving, in consequence of their neighbourhood and similarity. The rooks are old-established housekeepers, high-minded gentelfolk, that have had their hereditary abodes time out of mind; but as to the poor crows, they are a kind of vagabond, predatory, gipsy race, roving about the country, without any settled home; "their hands are against everybody, and everybody's against them," and they are gibbeted in every corn-field. Master Simon assures me that a female rook that should so far forget herself as to consort with a crow, would inevitably be disinherited, and indeed would be totally discarded by all her genteel acquaintance.

The squire is very watchful over the interests and concerns of his sable neighbours. As to Master Simon, he even pretends to know many of them by sight, and to have given names to them; he points out several which he says are old heads of families, and compares them to worthy old citizens, beforehand in the world, that wear cocked hats and silver buckles in their shoes. Notwithstanding the protecting benevolence of the squire, and their being residents in his empire, they seem to acknowledge no allegiance, and to hold no intercourse or intimacy. Their airy tenements are built almost out of the reach of gun-shot; and, notwithstanding their vicinity to the Hall, they maintain a most reserved and distrustful shyness of mankind.

There is one season of the year, however, which brings all birds in a manner to a level, and tames the pride of the loftiest highflyer; which is the season of building their nests. This takes place early in the spring, when the forest trees first begin to show their buds; the long withy ends of the branches to turn green; when the wild strawberry, and other

herbage of the sheltered woodlands, put forth their tender and tinted leaves, and the daisy and the primrose peep from under the hedges. At this time there is a general bustle among the the feathered tribes; an incessant fluttering about, and a cheerful chirping, indicative, like the germination of the vegetable world, of the reviving life and fecundity of the year.

It is then that the rooks forget their usual stateliness, and their shy and lofty habits. Instead of keeping up in the high regions of the air, swinging on the breezy tree tops, and looking down with sovereign contempt upon the humble crawlers upon earth, they are fain to throw off for a time the dignity of the gentleman, to come down to the ground, and put on the painstaking and industrious character of a labourer. They now lose their natural shyness, become fearless and familiar, and may be seen plying about in all directions, with an air of great assiduity, in search of building materials. Every now and then your path will be crossed by one of these busy old gentlemen, worrying about with awkward gait, as if troubled with the gout or with corns on his toes, casting about many a prying look, turning down first one eye, then the other, in earnest consideration upon every straw he meets with, until espying some mighty twig, large enough to make a rafter for his air-castle, he will seize upon it with avidity, and hurry away with it to the tree top; fearing, apparently, lest you should dispute with him the invaluable prize.

Like other castle-builders, these airy architects seem rather fanciful in the materials with which they build, and to like those most which come from a distance. Thus, though there are abundance of dry twigs on the surrounding trees, yet they never think of making use of them, but go foraging in distant lands, and come sailing home, one by one, from the ends of the earth, each bearing in his bill some precious piece of timber.

Nor must I avoid mentioning what, I grieve to say, rather derogates from the grave and honourable character of these ancient gentlefolk, that, during the architectural season, they are subject to great dissensions among themselves; that they make no scruple to defraud and plunder each other; and that sometimes the rookery is a scene of hideous brawl and commotion, in consequence of some delinquency of the kind. One of the partners generally remains on the nest to guard it from depredation; and I have seen severe contests when

some sly neighbour has endeavoured to filch away a tempting rafter that has captivated his eye. As I am not willing to admit any suspicion hastily that should throw a stigma on the general character of so worshipful a people, I am inclined to think that these larcenies are very much discountenanced by the higher classes, and even rigorously punished by those in authority; for I have now and then seen a whole gang of rooks fall upon the nest of some individual, pull it all to pieces, carry off the spoils, and even buffet the luckless proprietor. I have concluded this to be some signal punishment inflicted upon him by the officers of the police, for some pilfering misdemeanour; or, perhaps, that it was a crew of bailiffs carrying an execution into his house.

I have been amused with another of their movements during the building season. The steward has suffered a considerable number of sheep to graze on a lawn near the house, somewhat to the annoyance of the squire, who thinks this an innovation on the dignity of a park, which ought to be devoted to deer only. Be this as it may, there is a green knoll, not far from the drawing-room window, where the ewes and lambs are accustomed to assemble towards evening for the benefit of the setting sun. No sooner were they gathered here, at the time when these politic birds were building, than a stately old rook, who Master Simon assured me was the chief magistrate of this community, would settle down upon the head of one of the ewes, who, seeming conscious of this condescension, would desist from grazing, and stand fixed in motionless reverence of her august brethren; the rest of the rookery would then come wheeling down, in imitation of their leader, until every ewe had two or three of them cawing, and fluttering, and battling upon her back. Whether they requited the submission of the sheep by levying a contribution upon their fleece for the benefit of the rookery, I am not certain, though I presume they followed the usual custom of protecting powers.

The latter part of May is the time of great tribulation among the rookeries, when the young are just able to leave the nests, and balance themselves on the neighbouring branches. Now comes on the season of "rook shooting;" a terrible slaughter of the innocents. The squire, of course, prohibits all invasion of the kind on his territories; but I am told that a lamentable havoc takes place in the colony about the old church. Upon this devoted commonwealth the

village charges "with all its chivalry." Every idle wight that is lucky enough to possess an old gun or blunderbuss, together with all the archery of Slingsby's school, take the field on the occasion. In vain does the little parson interfere, or remonstrate in angry tones, from his study window that looks into the churchyard; there is a continual popping from morning to night. Being no great marksmen, their shots are not often effective; but every now and then a great shout from the besieging army of bumpkins makes known the downfall of some unlucky, squab rook, which comes to the ground with the emphasis of a squashed apple-dumpling.

Nor is the rookery entirely free from other troubles and disasters. In so aristocratical and lofty-minded a community, which boasts so much ancient blood and hereditary pride, it is natural to suppose that questions of etiquette will sometimes arise, and affairs of honour ensue. In fact, this is very often the case: bitter quarrels break out between individuals, which produce sad scuffings on the tree tops, and I have more than once seen a regular duel take place between two doughty heroes of the rookery. Their field of battle is generally the air; and their contest is managed in the most scientific and elegant manner: wheeling round and round each other, and towering higher and higher to get the 'vantage ground, until they sometimes disappear in the clouds before the combat is determined.

They have also fierce combats now and then with an invading hawk, and will drive him off from their territories by a *posse comitatus*. They are also extremely tenacious of their domains, and will suffer no other bird to inhabit the grove or its vicinity. There was a very ancient and respectable old bachelor owl that had long had his lodgings in a corner of the grove, but has been fairly ejected by the rooks, and has retired, disgusted with the world, to a neighbouring wood, where he leads the life of a hermit, and makes nightly complaints of his ill-treatment.

The hootings of this unhappy gentleman may generally be heard in the still evenings, when the rooks are all at rest; and I have often listened to them of a moonlight night, with a kind of mysterious gratification. This grey-bearded misanthrope of course is highly respected by the squire, but the servants have superstitious notions about him; and it would be difficult to get the dairymaid to venture after dark near to the wood which he inhabits.

Besides the private quarrels of the rooks, there are other misfortunes to which they are liable, and which often bring distress into the most respectable families of the rookery. Having the true baronial spirit of the good old feudal times, they are apt now and then to issue forth from their castles on a foray, and to lay the plebeian fields of the neighbouring country under contribution; in the course of which chivalrous expeditions they now and then get a shot from the rusty artillery of some refractory farmer. Occasionally, too, while they are quietly taking the air beyond the park boundaries, they have the incaution to come within the reach of the truant bowmen of Slingsby's school, and receive a flight shot from some unlucky urchin's arrow. In such case the wounded adventurer will sometimes have just strength enough to bring himself home, and giving up the ghost at the rookery, will hang dangling "all abroad" on a bough, like a thief on a gibbet; an awful warning to his friends, and an object of great commiseration to the squire.

But, maugre all these untoward incidents, the rooks have, upon the whole, a happy holiday life of it. When their young are reared, and fairly launched upon their native element, the air, the cares of the old folks seem over, and they resume all their aristocratical dignity and idleness. I have envied them the enjoyment which they appear to have in their ethereal heights, sporting with clamorous exultation about their lofty bowers; sometimes hovering over them, sometimes partially alighting upon the topmost branches, and there balancing with outstretched wings, and swinging in the breeze. Sometimes they seem to take a fashionable drive to the church, and amuse themselves by circling in airy rings about its spire; at other times a mere garrison is left at home to mount guard in their stronghold at the grove, while the rest roam abroad to enjoy the fine weather. About sunset the garrison gives notice of their return; their faint cawing will be heard from a great distance, and they will be seen far off like a sable cloud, and then nearer and nearer, until they all come soaring home. Then they perform several grand circuits in the air, over the Hall and garden, wheeling closer and closer, until they gradually settle down upon the grove, when a prodigious cawing takes place, as though they were relating their day's adventures.

I like at such times to walk about these dusky groves, and hear the various sounds of these airy people roosted so high

above me. As the gloom increases, their conversation subsides, and they seem to be gradually dropping asleep; but every now and then there is a querulous note, as if some one was quarrelling for a pillow, or a little more of the blanket. It is late in the evening before they completely sink to repose, and then their old anchorite neighbour, the owl, begins his lonely hootings from his bachelor's hall in the wood.

MAY-DAY.

It is the choice time of the year,
For the violets now appear;
Now the rose receives its birth,
And pretty primrose decks the earth.
Then to the May-pole come away,
For it is now a holiday.

ACTÆON AND DIANA.

As I was lying in bed this morning, enjoying one of those half dreams, half reveries, which are so pleasant in the country, when the birds are singing about the window, and the sunbeams peeping through the curtains, I was roused by the sound of music. On going down stairs, I found a number of villagers dressed in their holiday clothes, bearing a pole ornamented with garlands and ribands, and accompanied by the village band of music, under the direction of the tailor, the pale fellow who plays on the clarionet. They had all sprigs of hawthorn, or, as it is called, "the May," in their hats, and had brought green branches and flowers to decorate the Hall door and windows. They had come to give notice that the May-pole was reared on the green, and to invite the household to witness the sports. The Hall, according to custom, became a scene of hurry and delightful confusion. The servants were all agog with May and music; and there was no keeping either the tongues or the feet of the maids quiet, who were anticipating the sports of the green, and the evening dance.

I repaired to the village at an early hour to enjoy the merry-making. The morning was pure and sunny, such as a May morning is always described. The fields were white with daisies, the hawthorn was covered with its fragrant blossoms, the bee hummed about every bank, and the swallow played high in the air about the village steeple. It was one of those genial days when we seem to draw in pleasure with the very air we breathe, and to feel happy we know not why.

Whoever has felt the worth of worthy man, or has doted on lovely woman, will, on such a day, call them tenderly to mind, and feel his heart all alive with long-buried recollections. "For thenne," says the excellent romance of King Arthur, "lovers call ageyne to their mynde old gentilnes and old serveyse, and many kind dedes that were forgotten by neglygence."

Before reaching the village, I saw the May-pole towering above the cottages, with its gay garlands and streamers, and heard the sound of music. I found that there had been booths set up near it, for the reception of company; and a bower of green branches and flowers for the Queen of May, a fresh, rosy-cheeked girl of the village.

A band of morris-dancers were capering on the green in their fantastic dresses, jingling with hawks' bells, with a boy dressed up as Maid Marian, and the attendant fool rattling his box to collect contributions from the bystanders. The gipsy women, too, were already plying their mystery in by-corners of the village, reading the hands of the simple country girls, and no doubt promising them all good husbands and tribes of children.

The squire made his appearance in the course of the morning, attended by the parson, and was received with loud acclamations. He mingled among the country people throughout the day, giving and receiving pleasure wherever he went. The amusements of the day were under the management of Slingsby, the schoolmaster, who is not merely lord of misrule in his school, but master of the revels to the village. He was bustling about with the perplexed and anxious air of a man who has the oppressive burthen of promoting other people's merriment upon his mind. He had involved himself in a dozen scrapes in consequence of a politic intrigue, which, by the by, Master Simon and the Oxonian were at the bottom of, which had for object the election of the Queen of May. He had met with violent opposition from a faction of ale-drinkers, who were in favour of a bouncing barmaid, the daughter of the innkeeper; but he had been too strongly backed not to carry his point, though it shows that these rural crows, like all others, are objects of great ambition and heart-burning. I am told that Master Simon takes great interest, though in an underhand way, in the election of these May-Day Queens, and that the chaplet is generally secured for some rustic beauty that has found favour in his eyes.

In the course of the day there were various games of strength and agility on the green, at which a knot of village veterans presided, as judges of the lists. Among these I perceived that Ready-Money Jack took the lead, looking with a learned and critical eye on the merits of the different candidates; and though he was very laconic, and sometimes merely expressed himself by a nod, yet it was evident that his opinions far outweighed those of the most loquacious.

Young Jack Tibbets was the hero of the day, and carried off most of the prizes, though in some of the feats of agility he was rivalled by the "prodigal son," who appeared much in his element on this occasion; but his most formidable competitor was the notorious gipsy, the redoubtable "Starlight Tom." I was rejoiced at having an opportunity of seeing this "minion of the moon" in broad daylight. I found him a tall, swarthy, good-looking fellow, with a lofty air, something like what I have seen in an Indian chieftain; and with a certain lounging, easy, and almost graceful carriage, which I have often remarked in beings of the lazzaroni order, that lead an idle, loitering life, and have a gentleman-like contempt of labour.

Master Simon and the old general reconnoitred the ground together, and indulged a vast deal of harmless raking among the buxom country girls. Master Simon would give some of them a kiss on meeting with them, and would ask after their sisters, for he is acquainted with most of the farmers' families. Sometimes he would whisper, and affect to talk mischievously with them, and, if bantered on the subject, would turn it off with a laugh, though it was evident he liked to be suspected of being a gay Lothario amongst them.

He had much to say to the farmers about their farms, and seemed to know all their horses by name. There was an old fellow, with a round, ruddy face, and a night-cap under his hat, the village wit, who took several occasions to crack a joke with him in the hearing of his companions, to whom he would turn and wink hard when Master Simon had passed.

The harmony of the day, however, had nearly, at one time, been interrupted by the appearance of the radical on the ground, with two or three of his disciples. He soon got engaged in argument in the very thick of the throng, above which I could hear his voice, and now and then see his meagre hand, half a mile out of the sleeve, elevated in the air in violent gesticulation, and flourishing a pamphlet by

way of truncheon. He was decrying these idle nonsensical amusements in times of public distress, when it was every one's business to think of other matters, and to be miserable. The honest village logicians could make no stand against him, especially as he was seconded by his proselytes; when, to their great joy, Master Simon and the general came drifting down into the field of action. I saw that Master Simon was for making off, as soon as he found himself in the neighbourhood of this fire-ship; but the general was too loyal to suffer such talk in his hearing, and thought, no doubt, that a look and a word from a gentleman would be sufficient to shut up so shabby an orator. The latter, however, was no respecter of persons, but rather seemed to exult in having such important antagonists. He talked with greater volubility than ever, and soon drowned them with declamation on the subject of taxes, poor's rates, and the national debt. Master Simon endeavoured to brush along in his usual excursive manner, which had always answered amazingly well with the villagers; but the radical was one of those pestilent fellows that pin a man down to facts, and, indeed, he had two or three pamphlets in his pocket, to support every thing he advanced by printed documents. The general, too, found himself betrayed into a more serious action than his dignity could brook, and looked like a mighty Dutch Indiaman grievously peppered by a petty privateer. It was in vain that he swelled and looked big, and talked large, and endeavoured to make up by pomp of manner for poverty of matter; every home-thrust of the radical made him wheeze like a bellows, and seemed to let a volume of wind out of him. In a word, the two worthies from the Hall were completely dumbfounded, and this, too, in the presence of several of Master Simon's staunch admirers, who had always looked up to him as infallible. I do not know how he and the general would have managed to draw their forces decently from the field, had there not been a match at grinning through a horse-collar announced, whereupon the radical retired with great expression of contempt, and as soon as his back was turned, the argument was carried against him all hollow.

"Did you ever hear such a pack of stuff, general?" said Master Simon; "there's no talking with one of these chaps when he once gets that confounded Cobbett in his head."

"S'blood, sir!" said the general, wiping his forehead, "such fellows ought all to be transported!"

In the latter part of the day the ladies from the Hall paid a visit to the green. The fair Julia made her appearance, leaning on her lover's arm, and looking extremely pale and interesting. As she is a great favourite in the village, where she has been known from childhood, and as her late accident had been much talked about, the sight of her caused very manifest delight, and some of the old women of the village blessed her sweet face as she passed.

While they were walking about, I noticed the schoolmaster in earnest conversation with the young girl that represented the Queen of May, evidently endeavouring to spirit her up to some formidable undertaking. At length, as the party from the Hall approached her bower, she came forth, faltering at every step, until she reached the spot where the fair Julia stood between her lover and Lady Lillycraft. The little Queen then took the chaplet of flowers from her head, and attempted to put it on that of the bride elect; but the confusion of both was so great, that the wreath would have fallen to the ground, had not the officer caught it, and, laughing, placed it upon the blushing brows of his mistress. There was something charming in the very embarrassment of these two young creatures, both so beautiful, yet so different in their kinds of beauty. Master Simon told me, afterwards, that the Queen of May was to have spoken a few verses which the schoolmaster had written for her; but that she had neither wit to understand, nor memory to recollect them. "Besides," added he, "between you and I, she murders the king's English abominably; so she has acted the part of a wise woman in holding her tongue, and trusting to her pretty face."

Among the other characters from the Hall was Mrs. Hannah, my Lady Lillycraft's gentlewoman: to my surprise she was escorted by old Christy the huntsman, and followed by his ghost of a greyhound; but I find they are very old acquaintances, being drawn together from some sympathy of disposition. Mrs. Hannah moved about with starched dignity among the rustics, who drew back from her with more awe than they did from her mistress. Her mouth seemed shut as with a clasp; excepting that I now and then heard the word "fellows!" escape from between her lips, as she got accidentally jostled in the crowd.

But there was one other heart present that did not enter into the merriment of the scene, which was that of the simple

Phœbe Wilkins, the housekeeper's niece. The poor girl has continued to pine and whine for some time past, in consequence of the obstinate coldness of her lover; never was a little flirtation more severely punished. She appeared this day on the green, gallanted by a smart servant out of livery, and had evidently resolved to try the hazardous experiment of awakening the jealousy of her lover. She was dressed in her very best; affected an air of great gaiety: talked loud and girlishly, and laughed when there was nothing to laugh at. There was, however, an aching, heavy heart, in the poor baggage's bosom, in spite of all her levity. Her eye turned every now and then in quest of her reckless lover, and her cheek grew pale, and her fictitious gaiety vanished, on seeing him paying his rustic homage to the little May-Day Queen.

My attention was now diverted by a fresh stir and bustle. Music was heard from a distance; a banner was seen advancing up the road, preceded by a rustic band playing something like a march, and followed by a sturdy throng of country lads, the chivalry of a neighbouring and rival village.

No sooner had they reached the green than they challenged the heroes of the day to new trials of strength and activity. Several gymnastic contests ensued for the honour of the respective villages. In the course of these exercises, young Tibbets and the champion of the adverse party had an obstinate match at wrestling. They tugged, and strained, and panted, without either getting the mastery, until both came to the ground, and rolled upon the green. Just then the disconsolate Phœbe came by. She saw her recreant lover in fierce contest, as she thought, and in danger. In a moment pride, pique, and coquetry were forgotten; she rushed into the ring, seized upon the rival champion by the hair, and was on the point of wreaking on him her puny vengeance, when a buxom, strapping, country lass, the sweetheart of the prostrate swain, pounced upon her like a hawk, and would have stripped her of her fine plumage in a twinkling, had she also not been seized in her turn.

A complete tumult ensued. The chivalry of the two villages became embroiled. Blows began to be dealt, and sticks to be flourished. Phœbe was carried off from the field in hysterics. In vain did the sages of the village interfere. The sententious apothecary endeavoured to pour the soothing oil of his philosophy upon this tempestuous sea of passion, but was tumbled into the dust. Slingsby, the pedagogue, who

is a great lover of peace, went into the middle of the throng, as marshal of the day, to put an end to the commotion, but was rent in twain, and came out with his garment hanging in two strips from his shoulders; upon which the prodigal son dashed in with fury to revenge the insult which his patron had sustained. The tumult thickened; I caught glimpses of the jockey-cap of old Christy, like the helmet of a chieftain, bobbing about in the midst of the scuffle; while Mrs. Hannah, separated from her doughty protector, was squalling and striking at right and left with a faded parasol; being tossed and touselled about by the crowd in such wise as never happened to maiden gentlewoman before.

At length I beheld old Ready-Money Jack making his way into the very thickest of the throng; tearing it, as it were, apart, and enforcing peace, *vi et armis*. It was surprising to see the sudden quiet that ensued. The storm settled down at once into tranquillity. The parties, having no real grounds of hostility, were readily pacified, and in fact were a little at a loss to know why and how they had got by the ears. Slingsby was speedily stitched together again by his friend the tailor, and resumed his usual good humour. Mrs. Hannah drew on one side to plume her rumpled feathers; and old Christy, having repaired his damages, took her under his arm, and they swept back again to the Hall, ten times more bitter against mankind than ever.

The Tibbets family alone seemed slow in recovering from the agitation of the scene. Young Jack was evidently very much moved by the heroism of the unlucky Phœbe. His mother, who had been summoned to the field of action by news of the affray, was in a sad panic, and had need of all her management to keep him from following his mistress, and coming to a perfect reconciliation.

What heightened the alarm and perplexity of the good managing dame was, that the matter had roused the slow apprehension of old Ready-Money himself; who was very much struck by the intrepid interference of so pretty and delicate a girl, and was sadly puzzled to understand the meaning of the violent agitation in his family.

When all this came to the ears of the squire, he was grievously scandalized that his May-Day fête should have been disgraced by such a brawl. He ordered Phœbe to appear before him; but the girl was so frightened and distressed, that she came sobbing and trembling, and, at the first

question he asked, fell again into hysterics. Lady Lillycraft, who had understood that there was an affair of the heart at the bottom of this distress, immediately took the girl into great favour and protection, and made her peace with the squire. This was the only thing that disturbed the harmony of the day, if we except the discomfiture of Master Simon and the general by the radical. Upon the whole, therefore, the squire had very fair reason to be satisfied that he had rode his hobby throughout the day without any other molestation.

The reader, learned in these matters, will perceive that all this was but a faint shadow of the once gay and fanciful rites of May. The peasantry have lost the proper feeling for these rites, and have grown almost as strange to them as the boors of La Mancha were to the customs of chivalry in the days of the valorous Don Quixote. Indeed, I considered it a proof of the discretion with which the squire rides his hobby, that he had not pushed the thing any farther, nor attempted to revive many obsolete usages of the day, which, in the present matter-of-fact times, would appear affected and absurd. I must say, though I do it under the rose, the general brawl in which this festival had nearly terminated, has made me doubt whether these rural customs of the good old times were always so very loving and innocent as we are apt to fancy them; and whether the peasantry in those times were really so Arcadian as they have been fondly represented. I begin to fear—

——— “Those days were never; airy dreams
Sat for the picture, and the poet's hand,
Imparting substance to an empty shade,
Imposed a gay delirium for a truth.
Grant it; I still must envy them an age
That favoured such a dream.”

THE MANUSCRIPT.

YESTERDAY was a day of quiet and repose after the bustle of May-Day. During the morning I joined the ladies in a small sitting-room, the windows of which came down to the floor, and opened upon a terrace of the garden, which was set out with delicate shrubs and flowers. The soft sunshine that fell into the room through the branches of trees that overhung

the windows, the sweet smell of the flowers, and the singing of the birds, seemed to produce a pleasing, yet calming effect on the whole party, for some time elapsed without any one speaking. Lady Lillycraft and Miss Templeton were sitting by an elegant work-table near one of the windows, occupied with some pretty, lady-like work. The captain was on a stool at his mistress's feet, looking over some music, and poor Phœbe Wilkins, who has always been a kind of pet among the ladies, but who has risen vastly in favour of Lady Lillycraft, in consequence of some tender confessions, sat in one corner of the room, with swollen eyes, working pensively at some of the fair Julia's wedding ornaments.

The silence was interrupted by her ladyship, who suddenly proposed a task to the captain. "I am in your debt," said she, "for that tale you read to us the other day; I will now furnish one in return, if you'll read it; and it is just suited to this sweet May morning, for it is all about love!"

The proposition seemed to delight every one present. The captain smiled assent. Her ladyship rang for her page, and despatched him to her room for the manuscript. "As the captain," said she, "gave us an account of the author of his story, it is but right I should give one of mine. It was written by the clergyman of the parish where I reside. He is a thin, elderly man, of a delicate constitution, but positively one of the most charming men that ever lived. He lost his wife a few years since; one of the sweetest women you ever saw. He has two sons, whom he educates himself; both of whom already write delightful poetry. His parsonage is a lovely place, close by the church, all overrun with ivy and honeysuckles, with the sweetest flower-garden about it; for you know our country clergymen are always fond of flowers, and make their parsonages perfect pictures.

"His living is a very good one, and he is very much beloved, and does a great deal of good in the neighbourhood and among the poor. And then such sermons as he preaches! Oh, if you could only hear one, taken from a text in Solomon's Song, all about love and matrimony, one of the sweetest things you ever heard! He preaches it at least once a year, in spring time, for he knows I am fond of it. He always dines with me on Sundays, and often brings me some of the sweetest pieces of poetry, all about the pleasures of melancholy, and such subjects, that make me cry so, you can't think. I wish he would publish. I think he has some things as sweet as any thing in Moore or Lord Byron.

"He fell into very ill health some time ago, and was advised to go to the continent; and I gave him no peace till he went, and promised to take care of his two boys until he returned.

"He was gone for above a year, and was quite restored. When he came back, he sent me the tale I'm going to show you—Oh, here it is!" said she, as the page put in her hands a beautiful box of satin-wood. She unlocked it, and from among several parcels of notes on embossed paper, cards of charades, and copies of verses, she drew out a crimson velvet case, that smelt very much of perfumes. From this she took a manuscript, daintily written on gilt-edged vellum paper, and stitched with a light blue riband. This she handed to the captain, who read the following tale, which I have procured for the entertainment of the reader.

ANNETTE DELARBRE.

The soldier frae the war returns
And the merchant from the main,
But I hae parted wi' my love,
And ne'er to meet again,

My dear,

And ne'er to meet again.

When day is gone, and night is come,
And a' are boun to sleep,
I think on them that's far awa
The lee-lang night and weep,

My dear,

The lee-lang night and weep.

OLD SCOTCH BALLAD.

IN the course of a tour that I once made in Lower Normandy, I remained for a day or two at the old town of Honfleur, which stands near the mouth of the Seine. It was the time of a fête, and all the world was thronging in the evening to dance at the fair, held before the chapel of Our Lady of Grace. As I like all kinds of innocent merry-making, I joined the throng.

The chapel is situated at the top of a high hill, or promontory, from whence its bell may be heard at a distance by the mariner at night. It is said to have given the name to the port of Havre de Grace, which lies directly opposite on the

other side of the Seine. The road up to the chapel went in a zig-zag course, along the brow of the steep coast: it was shaded by trees, from between which I had beautiful peeps at the ancient towers of Honfleur below, the varied scenery of the opposite shore, the white buildings of Havre in the distance, and the wide sea beyond. The road was enlivened by groups of peasant girls, in their bright crimson dresses, and tall caps; and I found all the flower of the neighbourhood assembled on the green that crowns the summit of the hill.

The chapel of Notre Dame de Grace is a favourite resort of the inhabitants of Honfleur and its vicinity, both for pleasure and devotion. At this little chapel, prayers are put up by the mariners of the port previous to their voyages, and by their friends during their absence; and votive offerings are hung about its walls, in fulfilment of vows made during times of shipwreck and disaster. The chapel is surrounded by trees. Over the portal is an image of the Virgin and Child, with an inscription which struck me as being quite poetical:—

“Etoile de la mer, priez pour nous !”

(Star of the sea, pray for us !)

On a level spot near the chapel, under a grove of noble trees, the populace dance on fine summer evenings; and here are held frequent fairs and fêtes, which assemble all the rustic beauty of the loveliest parts of Lower Normandy. The present was an occasion of the kind. Booths and tents were erected among the trees; there were the usual displays of finery to tempt the rural coquette, and of wonderful shows to entice the curious; mountebanks were exerting their eloquence; jugglers and fortune-tellers astonishing the credulous; while whole rows of grotesque saints, in wood and wax-work, were offered for the purchase of the pious.

The fête had assembled in one view all the picturesque costumes of the Pays d'Auge, and the Côte de Caux. I beheld tall, stately caps, and trim bodices, according to fashions which have been handed down from mother to daughter for centuries, the exact counterparts of those worn in the time of the Conqueror; and which surprised me by their faithful resemblance to those which I had seen in the old pictures of Froissart's Chronicles, and in the paintings of illuminated manuscripts. Any one, also, that has been in Lower Normandy, must have remarked the beauty of the peasantry, and that air of native elegance which prevails among them. It is

to this country, undoubtedly, that the English owe their good looks. It was from hence that the bright carnation, the fine blue eye, the light auburn hair, passed over to England in the train of the Conqueror, and filled the land with beauty.

The scene before me was perfectly enchanting; the assemblage of so many fresh and blooming faces; the gay groups in fanciful dresses; some dancing on the green, others strolling about, or seated on the grass; the fine clumps of trees in the foreground, bordering the brow of this airy height, and the broad, green sea, sleeping in summer tranquillity, in the distance.

Whilst I was regarding this animated picture, I was struck with the appearance of a beautiful girl, who passed through the crowd without seeming to take any interest in their amusements. She was slender and delicate in her form; she had not the bloom upon her cheek that is usual among the peasantry of Normandy, and her blue eyes had a singular and melancholy expression. She was accompanied by a venerable-looking man, whom I presumed to be her father. There was a whisper among the bystanders, and a wistful look after her as she passed; the young men touched their hats, and some of the children followed her at a little distance, watching her movements. She approached the edge of the hill, where there is a little platform, from whence the people of Honfleur look out for the approach of vessels. Here she stood for some time waving her handkerchief, though there was nothing to be seen but two or three fishing-boats, like mere specks on the bosom of the distant ocean.

These circumstances excited my curiosity, and I made some inquiries about her, which were answered with readiness and intelligence by a priest of the neighbouring chapel. Our conversation drew together several of the bystanders, each of whom had something to communicate, and from them all I gathered the following particulars.

Annette Delarbre was the only daughter of one of the higher order of farmers, or small proprietors, as they are called, who lived at Pont l'Eveque, a pleasant village not far from Honfleur, in that rich pastoral part of Lower Normandy called the Pays d'Auge. Annette was the pride and delight of her parents, and was brought up with the fondest indulgence. She was gay, tender, petulant, and susceptible. All her feelings were quick and ardent; and never having experienced contradiction or restraint, she was little practised in self-con-

trol: nothing but the native goodness of her heart kept her from running continually into error.

Even while a child, her susceptibility was evinced in an attachment which she formed to a playmate, Eugene La Forgue, the only son of a widow who lived in the neighbourhood. Their childish love was an epitome of maturer passion; it had its caprices, and jealousies, and quarrels, and reconciliations. It was assuming something of a graver character as Annette entered her fifteenth, and Eugene his nineteenth year, when he was suddenly carried off to the army by the conscription.

It was a heavy blow to his widowed mother, for he was her only pride and comfort; but it was one of those sudden bereavements which mothers were perpetually doomed to feel in France during the time that continual and bloody wars were incessantly draining her youth. It was a temporary affliction also to Annette to lose her lover. With tender embraces, half childish, half womanish, she parted from him. The tears streamed from her blue eyes, as she bound a braid of her fair hair round his wrist; but the smiles still broke through; for she was yet too young to feel how serious a thing is separation, and how many chances there are, when parting in this wide world, against our ever meeting again.

Weeks, months, years flew by. Annette increased in beauty as she increased in years, and was the reigning belle of the neighbourhood. Her time passed innocently and happily. Her father was a man of some consequence in the rural community, and his house was the resort of the gayest of the village. Annette held a kind of rural court; she was always surrounded by companions of her own age, among whom she shone unrivalled. Much of their time was past in making lace, the prevalent manufacture of the neighbourhood. As they sat at this delicate and feminine labour, the merry tale and sprightly song went round: none laughed with a lighter heart than Annette; and if she sang, her voice was perfect melody. Their evenings were enlivened by the dance, or by those pleasant social games so prevalent among the French; and when she appeared at the village ball on Sunday evening, she was the theme of universal admiration.

As she was a rural heiress, she did not want for suitors; many advantageous offers were made her, but she refused them all. She laughed at the pretended pangs of her admirers, and triumphed over them with the caprice of buoyant

youth and conscious beauty. With all her apparent levity, however, could any one have read the story of her heart, they might have traced in it some fond remembrance of her early playmate, not so deeply graven as to be painful, but too deep to be easily obliterated; and they might have noticed, amidst all her gaiety, the tenderness that marked her manner towards the mother of Eugene. She would often steal away from her youthful companions and their amusements, to pass whole days with the good widow; listening to her fond talk about her boy, and blushing with secret pleasure when his letters were read, at finding herself a constant theme of recollection and inquiry.

At length the sudden return of peace, which sent many a warrior to his native cottage, brought back Eugene, a young, sun-burnt soldier, to the village. I need not say how rapturously his return was greeted by his mother, who saw in him the pride and staff of her old age. He had risen in the service by his merit; but brought away little from the wars, excepting a soldier-like air, a gallant name, and a scar across the forehead. He brought back, however, a nature unspoiled by the camp. He was frank, open, generous, and ardent. His heart was quick and kind in its impulses, and was perhaps a little softer from having suffered: it was full of tenderness for Annette. He had received frequent accounts of her from his mother; and the mention of her kindness to his lonely parent had rendered her doubly dear to him. He had been wounded; he had been a prisoner; he had been in various troubles, but he had always preserved the braid of her hair which she had bound round his arm. It had been a kind of talisman to him; he had many a time looked upon it as he lay on the hard ground, and the thought that he might one day see Annette again, and the fair fields about his native village, had cheered his heart, and enabled him to bear up against every hardship.

He had left Annette almost a child; he found her a blooming woman. If he had loved her before, he now adored her. Annette was equally struck with the improvement which time had made in her lover. She noticed, with secret admiration, his superiority to the other young men of the village; the frank, lofty, military air, that distinguished him from all the rest at their rural gatherings. The more she saw him, the more her light, playful fondness of former years deepened into ardent and powerful affection. But Annette was a rural

belle. She had tasted the sweets of dominion, and had been rendered wilful and capricious by constant indulgence at home, and admiration abroad. She was conscious of her power over Eugene, and delighted in exercising it. She sometimes treated him with petulant caprice, enjoying the pain which she inflicted by her frowns, from the idea how soon she would chase it away again by her smiles. She took a pleasure in alarming his fears, by affecting a temporary preference to some one or other of his rivals; and then would delight in allaying them by an ample measure of returning kindness. Perhaps there was some degree of vanity gratified by all this; it might be a matter of triumph to show her absolute power over the young soldier, who was the universal object of female admiration. Eugene, however, was of too serious and ardent a nature to be trifled with. He loved too fervently not to be filled with doubt. He saw Annette surrounded by admirers, and full of animation; the gayest among the gay at all their rural festivities, and apparently most gay when he was most dejected. Every one saw through this caprice but himself; every one saw that in reality she doted on him; but Eugene alone suspected the sincerity of her affection. For some time he bore this coquetry with secret impatience and distrust; but his feelings grew sore and irritable, and overcame his self-command. A slight misunderstanding took place; a quarrel ensued. Annette, unaccustomed to be thwarted and contradicted, and full of the insolence of youthful beauty, assumed an air of disdain. She refused all explanations to her lover, and they parted in anger. That very evening Eugene saw her, full of gaiety, dancing with one of his rivals; and as her eye caught his, fixed on her with unfeigned distress, it sparkled with more than usual vivacity. It was a finishing blow to his hopes, already so much impaired by secret distrust. Pride and resentment both struggled in his breast, and seemed to rouse his spirit to all its wonted energy. He retired from her presence with the hasty determination never to see her again.

A woman is more considerate in affairs of love than a man; because love is more the study and business of her life. Annette soon repented of her indiscretion; she felt that she had used her lover unkindly; she felt that she had trifled with his sincere and generous nature—and then he looked so handsome when he parted after their quarrel—his fine features lighted up by indignation. She had intended making up

with him at the evening dance; but his sudden departure prevented her. She now promised herself that when next they met she would amply repay him by the sweets of a perfect reconciliation, and that, thenceforward, she would never, never tease him more! That promise was never to be fulfilled. Day after day passed; but Eugene did not make his appearance. Sunday evening came, the usual time when all the gaiety of the village assembled; but Eugene was not there. She inquired after him; he had left the village. She now became alarmed, and, forgetting all coyness and affected indifference, called on Eugene's mother for an explanation. She found her full of affliction, and learnt with surprise and consternation that Eugene had gone to sea.

While his feelings were yet smarting with her affected disdain, and his heart a prey to alternate indignation and despair, he had suddenly embraced an invitation which had repeatedly been made him by a relation, who was fitting out a ship from the port of Honfleur, and who wished him to be the companion of his voyage. Absence appeared to him the only cure for his unlucky passion; and in the temporary transports of his feelings, there was something gratifying in the idea of having half the world intervene between them. The hurry necessary for his departure left no time for cool reflection; it rendered him deaf to the remonstrances of his afflicted mother. He hastened to Honfleur just in time to make the needful preparations for the voyage; and the first news that Annette received of this sudden determination was a letter delivered by his mother, returning her pledges of affection, particularly the long-treasured braid of her hair, and bidding her a last farewell, in terms more full of sorrow and tenderness than upbraiding.

This was the first stroke of real anguish that Annette had ever received, and it overcame her. The vivacity of her spirits was apt to hurry her to extremes; she for a time gave way to ungovernable transports of affliction and remorse, and manifested, in the violence of her grief, the real ardour of her affection. The thought occurred to her that the ship might not yet have sailed; she seized on the hope with eagerness, and hastened with her father to Honfleur. The ship had sailed that very morning. From the heights above the town she saw it lessening to a speck on the broad bosom of the ocean, and before evening the white sail had faded from her sight. She turned full of anguish to the neighbouring

chapel of our Lady of Grace, and throwing herself on the pavement, poured out prayers and tears for the safe return of her lover.

When she returned home, the cheerfulness of her spirits was at an end. She looked back with remorse and self-upbraiding at her past caprices; she turned with distaste from the adulation of her admirers, and had no longer any relish for the amusements of the village. With humiliation and diffidence she sought the widowed mother of Eugene; but was received by her with an overflowing heart; for she only beheld in Annette one who could sympathize in her doting fondness for her son. It seemed some alleviation of her remorse to sit by the mother all day, to study her wants, to beguile her heavy hours, to hang about her with the caressing endearments of a daughter, and to seek by every means, if possible, to supply the place of the son, whom she reproached herself with having driven away.

In the meantime the ship made a prosperous voyage to her destined port. Eugene's mother received a letter from him, in which he lamented the precipitancy of his departure. The voyage had given him time for sober reflection. If Annette had been unkind to him, he ought not to have forgotten what was due to his mother, who was now advanced in years. He accused himself of selfishness in only listening to the suggestions of his own inconsiderate passions. He promised to return with the ship, to make his mind up to his disappointment, and to think of nothing but making his mother happy—"And when he does return," said Annette, clasping her hands with transport, "it shall not be my fault if he ever leaves us again."

The time approached for the ship's return. She was daily expected, when the weather became dreadfully tempestuous. Day after day brought news of vessels foundered or driven on shore, and the sea coast was strewn with wrecks. Intelligence was received of the looked-for ship having been dismasted in a violent storm, and the greatest fears were entertained for her safety.

Annette never left the side of Eugene's mother. She watched every change of her countenance with painful solicitude, and endeavoured to cheer her with hopes, while her own mind was racked by anxiety. She tasked her efforts to be gay, but it was a forced and unnatural gaiety; a sigh from the mother would completely check it; and when she could

no longer restrain the rising tears, she would hurry away and pour out her agony in secret. Every anxious look, every anxious inquiry of the mother, whenever a door opened, or a strange face appeared, was an arrow to her soul. She considered every disappointment as a pang of her own infliction, and her heart sickened under the care-worn expression of the maternal eye. At length this suspense became insupportable. She left the village and hastened to Honfleur, hoping every hour, every moment, to receive some tidings of her lover. She paced the pier, and wearied the seamen of the port with her inquiries. She made a daily pilgrimage to the chapel of our Lady of Grace; hung votive garlands on the wall, and passed hours either kneeling before the altar, or looking out from the brow of the hill upon the angry sea.

At length word was brought that the long wished-for vessel was in sight. She was seen standing into the mouth of the Seine, shattered and crippled, bearing marks of having been sadly tempest-tossed. There was a general joy diffused by her return; and there was not a brighter eye, nor a lighter heart than Annette's in the little port of Honfleur, as the ship came to anchor in the river; and shortly after a boat put off for the shore. The populace crowded down to the pier-head to welcome it. Annette stood blushing, and smiling, and trembling, and weeping; for a thousand painfully pleasing emotions agitated her breast at the thoughts of the meeting and reconciliation about to take place. Her heart throbbed to pour itself out, and atone to her gallant lover for all its errors. At one moment she would place herself in a conspicuous situation, where she might catch his view at once, and surprise him by her welcome; but the next moment a doubt would come across her mind, and she would shrink among the throng, trembling and faint, and gasping with her emotions. Her agitation increased as the boat drew near, until it became distressing; and it was almost a relief to her when she perceived that her lover was not there. She presumed that some accident had detained him on board of the ship; and she felt that the delay would enable her to gather more self-possession for the meeting. As the boat neared the shore, many inquiries were made, and laconic answers returned. At length Annette heard some inquiries after her lover. Her heart palpitated; there was a moment's pause; the reply was brief, but awful. He had been washed from the deck, with two of the crew, in the midst of a stormy

night, when it was impossible to render any assistance. A piercing shriek broke from among the crowd; and Annette had nearly fallen into the waves.

The sudden revulsion of feelings after such a transient gleam of happiness was too much for her harassed frame. She was carried home senseless. Her life was for some time despaired of, and it was months before she recovered her health; but she never had perfectly recovered her mind: it still remained unsettled with respect to her lover's fate.

"The subject," continued my informer, "is never mentioned in her hearing; but she sometimes speaks of it herself, and it seems as though there were some vague train of impressions in her mind, in which hope and fear are strangely mingled; some imperfect idea of her lover's shipwreck, and yet some expectation of his return.

"Her parents have tried every means to cheer her, and to banish these gloomy images from her thoughts. They assemble round her the young companions in whose society she used to delight, and they will work, and chat, and sing, and laugh, as formerly; but she will sit silently among them, and will sometimes weep in the midst of their gaiety; and, if spoken to, will make no reply, but look up with streaming eyes, and sing a dismal little song, which she has learned somewhere, about a shipwreck. It makes every one's heart ache to see her in this way, for she used to be the happiest creature in the village.

"She passes the greater part of the time with Eugene's mother; whose only consolation is her society, and who dotes on her with a mother's tenderness. She is the only one that has perfect influence over Annette in every mood. The poor girl seems, as formerly, to make an effort to be cheerful in her company; but will sometimes gaze upon her with the most piteous look, and then kiss her gray hairs, and fall on her neck and weep.

"She is not always melancholy, however; she has occasional intervals when she will be bright and animated for days together; but there is a degree of wildness attending these fits of gaiety, that prevents their yielding any satisfaction to her friends. At such times she will arrange her room, which is all covered with pictures of ships and legends of saints, and will wreath a white chaplet, as if for a wedding, and prepare wedding ornaments. She will listen anxiously at the door, and look frequently out at the window, as if expecting some

one's arrival. It is supposed that at such times she is looking for her lover's return; but, as no one touches upon the theme, or mentions his name in her presence, the current of her thoughts is mere matter of conjecture. Now and then she will make a pilgrimage to the chapel of Notre Dame de Grace; where she will pray for hours at the altar, and decorate the images with wreaths that she has woven, or will wave her handkerchief from the terrace, as you have seen, if there is any vessel in the distance."

Upwards of a year, he informed me, had now elapsed without effacing from her mind this singular taint of insanity; still her friends hoped it might gradually wear away. They had at one time removed her to a distant part of the country, in hopes that absence from the scenes connected with her story might have a salutary effect; but when her periodical melancholy returned, she became more restless and wretched than usual, and, secretly escaping from her friends, set out on foot, without knowing the road, on one of her pilgrimages to the chapel.

This little story entirely drew my attention from the gay scene of the fête, and fixed it upon the beautiful Annette. While she was yet standing on the terrace, the vesper bell was rung from the neighbouring chapel. She listened for a moment, and then, drawing a small rosary from her bosom, walked in that direction. Several of the peasantry followed her in silence; and I felt too much interested not to do the same.

The chapel, as I said before, is in the midst of a grove, on the high promontory. The inside is hung round with little models of ships, and rude paintings of wrecks, and perils at sea, and providential deliverances; the votive offerings of captains and crews that have been saved. On entering, Annette paused for a moment before a picture of the Virgin, which, I observed, had recently been decorated with a wreath of artificial flowers. When she reached the middle of the chapel, she knelt down, and those who followed her involuntarily did the same at a little distance. The evening sun shone softly through the chequered grove into one window of the chapel. A perfect stillness reigned within; and this stillness was the more impressive, contrasted with the distant sound of music and merriment from the fair. I could not take my eyes off from the poor suppliant; her lips moved as she told her beads, but her prayers were breathed in silence. It

might have been mere fancy excited by the scene, that as she raised her eyes to heaven, I thought they had an expression truly seraphic. But I am easily affected by female beauty, and there was something in this mixture of love, devotion, and partial insanity, that was inexpressibly touching.

As the poor girl left the chapel, there was a sweet serenity in her looks; and I was told that she would return home, and in all probability be calm and cheerful for days and even weeks, in which time it was supposed that hope predominated in her mental malady; and that, when the dark side of her mind, as her friends call it, was about to turn up, it would be known by her neglecting her distaff or her lace, singing plaintive songs, and weeping in silence.

She passed on from the chapel without noticing the fête, but smiling and speaking to many as she passed. I followed her with my eye as she descended the winding road towards Honfleur, leaning on her father's arm. "Heaven," thought I, "has ever its store of balms for the hurt mind and wounded spirit, and may in time rear up this broken flower to be once more the pride and joy of the valley. The very delusion in which the poor girl walks may be one of those mists kindly diffused by Providence over the regions of thought, when they become too fruitful of misery. The veil may gradually be raised which obscures the horizon of her mind, as she is enabled steadily and calmly to contemplate the sorrows at present hidden in mercy from her view."

On my return from Paris about a year afterwards, I turned off from the beaten route at Rouen, to revisit some of the most striking scenes of Lower Normandy. Having passed through the lovely country of the Pays d'Auge, I reached Honfleur on a fine afternoon, intending to cross to Havre the next morning and embark for England. As I had no better way of passing the evening, I strolled up the hill to enjoy the fine prospect from the chapel of Notre Dame de Grace; and while there, I thought of inquiring after the fate of poor Annette Delarbre. The priest who had told me her story was officiating at vespers, after which I accosted him, and learnt from him the remaining circumstances. He told me that, from the time I had seen her at the chapel, her disorder took a sudden turn for the worse, and her health rapidly declined. Her cheerful intervals became shorter and less frequent, and attended with more incoherency. She grew languid, silent,

and moody in her melancholy; her form was wasted, her looks pale and disconsolate, and it was feared she would never recover. She became impatient of all sounds of gaiety, and was never so contented as when Eugene's mother was near her. The good woman watched over her with patient, yearning solicitude; and in seeking to beguile her sorrows, would half forget her own. Sometimes as she sat looking upon her pallid face, the tears would fill her eyes, which when Annette perceived, she would anxiously wipe them away, and tell her not to grieve, for that Eugene would soon return; and then she would affect a forced gaiety, as in former times, and sing a lively air; but a sudden recollection would come over her, and she would burst into tears, hang on the poor mother's neck, and entreat her not to curse her for having destroyed her son.

Just at this time, to the astonishment of every one, news was received of Eugene, who, it appeared, was still living. When almost drowned, he had fortunately seized upon a spar which had been washed from the ship's deck. Finding himself nearly exhausted, he had fastened himself to it and floated for a day and night, until all sense had left him. On recovering, he had found himself on board a vessel bound to India, but so ill as not to move without assistance. His health had continued precarious throughout the voyage; on arriving in India he had experienced many vicissitudes, and had been transferred from ship to ship, and hospital to hospital. His constitution had enabled him to struggle through every hardship; and he was now in a distant port, waiting only for the sailing of a ship to return home.

Great caution was necessary in imparting these tidings to the mother, and even then she was nearly overcome by the transports of her joy. But how to impart them to Annette was a matter of still greater perplexity. Her state of mind had been so morbid; she had been subject to such violent changes, and the cause of her derangement had been of such an insupportable and hopeless kind, that her friends had always forbore to tamper with her feelings. They had never even hinted at the subject of her griefs, nor encouraged the theme when she adverted to it, but had passed it over in silence, hoping that time would gradually wear the traces of it from her recollection, or at least, would render them less painful. They now felt at a loss how to undeceive her even in her misery, lest the sudden recurrence of happiness might

confirm the estrangement of her reason, or might overpower her enfeebled frame. They ventured, however, to probe those wounds which they formerly did not dare to touch, for they now had the balm to pour into them. They led the conversation to those topics which they had hitherto shunned, and endeavoured to ascertain the current of her thoughts in those varying moods that had formerly perplexed them. They found, however, that her mind was even more affected than they had imagined. All her ideas were confused and wandering. Her bright and cheerful moods, which now grew seldomer than ever, were all the effects of mental delusion. At such times she had no recollection of her lover's having been in danger, but was only anticipating his arrival. "When the winter has passed away," said she. "and the trees put on their blossoms, and the swallow comes back over the sea, he will return." When she was drooping and desponding, it was in vain to remind her of what she had said in her gayer moments, and to assure her that Eugene would indeed return shortly. She wept on in silence, and appeared insensible to their words. But at times her agitation became violent, when she would upbraid herself with having driven Eugene from his mother and brought sorrow on her gray hairs. Her mind admitted but one leading idea at a time, which nothing could divert or efface; or if they ever succeeded in interrupting the current of her fancy, it only became the more incoherent, and increased the feverishness that preyed upon both mind and body. Her friends felt more alarm for her than ever, for they feared that her senses were irrecoverably gone, and her constitution completely undermined.

In the meantime, Eugene returned to the village. He was violently affected when the story of Annette was told him. With bitterness of heart he upbraided his own rashness and infatuation that had hurried him away from her, and accused himself as the author of all her woes. His mother would describe to him all the anguish and remorse of poor Annette; the tenderness with which she clung to her, and endeavoured, even in the midst of her insanity, to console her for the loss of her son, and the touching expressions of affection that were mingled with her most incoherent wanderings of thought, until his feelings would be wound up to agony, and he would entreat her to desist from the recital. They did not dare as yet to bring him into Annette's sight; but he was

permitted to see her when she was sleeping. The tears streamed down his sun-burnt cheeks as he contemplated the ravages which grief and malady had made; and his heart swelled almost to breaking as he beheld round her neck the very braid of hair which she once gave him in token of girlish affection, and which he had returned to her in anger.

At length the physician that attended her determined to venture upon an experiment; to take advantage of one of those cheerful moods when her mind was visited by hope, and to endeavour to engraft, as it were, the reality upon the delusions of her fancy. These moods had now become very rare, for nature was sinking under the continual pressure of her mental malady, and the principle of reaction was daily growing weaker. Every effort was tried to bring on a cheerful interval of the kind. Several of her most favourite companions were kept continually about her; they chatted gaily, they laughed, and sang, and danced; but Annette reclined with languid frame and hollow eye, and took no part in their gaiety. At length the winter was gone; the trees put forth their leaves; the swallows began to build in the eaves of the house, and the robin and wren piped all day beneath the window. Annette's spirits gradually revived. She began to deck her person with unusual care; and, bringing forth a basket of artificial flowers, she went to work to wreath a bridal chaplet of white roses. Her companions asked her why she prepared the chaplet. "What!" said she with a smile, "have you not noticed the trees putting on their wedding-dresses of blossoms? Has not the swallow flown back over the sea? Do you not know that the time is come for Eugene to return? that he will be home to-morrow, and that on Sunday we are to be married?"

Her words were repeated to the physician, and he seized on them at once. He directed that her idea should be encouraged and acted upon. Her words were echoed through the house. Every one talked of the return of Eugene as a matter of course; they congratulated her upon her approaching happiness, and assisted her in her preparations. The next morning the same theme was resumed. She was dressed out to receive her lover. Every bosom fluttered with anxiety. A cabriolet drove into the village. "Eugene is coming!" was the cry. She saw him alight at the door, and rushed with a shriek into his arms.

Her friends trembled for the result of this critical experi-

ment; but she did not sink under it, for her fancy had prepared her for his return. She was as one in a dream, to whom a tide of unlooked-for prosperity, that would have overwhelmed his waking reason, seems but the natural current of circumstances. Her conversation, however, showed that her senses were wandering. There was an absolute forgetfulness of all past sorrow; a wild and feverish gaiety that at times was incoherent.

The next morning she awoke languid and exhausted. All the occurrences of the preceding day had passed away from her mind as though they had been the mere illusions of her fancy. She rose melancholy and abstracted, and as she dressed herself, was heard to sing one of her plaintive ballads. When she entered the parlour her eyes were swollen with weeping. She heard Eugene's voice without and started. She passed her hand across her forehead, and stood musing, like one endeavouring to recall a dream. Eugene entered the room, and advanced towards her; she looked at him with an eager, searching look, murmured some indistinct words, and, before he could reach her, sank upon the floor.

She relapsed into a wild and unsettled state of mind; but now that the first shock was over, the physician ordered that Eugene should keep continually in her sight. Sometimes she did not know him; at other times she would talk to him as if he were going to sea, and would implore him not to part from her in anger; and when he was not present she would speak of him as if buried in the ocean, and would sit, with clasped hands, looking upon the ground, the picture of despair.

As the agitation of her feelings subsided, and her frame recovered from the shock which it had received, she became more placid and coherent. Eugene kept almost continually near her. He formed the real object round which her scattered ideas once more gathered, and which linked them once more with the realities of life. But her changeful disorder now appeared to take a new turn. She became languid and inert, and would sit for hours silent, and almost in a state of lethargy. If roused from this stupor, it seemed as if her mind would make some attempts to follow up a train of thought, but would soon become confused. She would regard every one that approached her with an anxious and inquiring eye, that seemed continually to disappoint itself. Sometimes, as her lover sat holding her hand, she would look pensively in his face without saying a word, until his heart was overcome;

and after these transient fits of intellectual exertion, she would sink again into lethargy.

By degrees this stupor increased; her mind appeared to have subsided into a stagnant and almost deathlike calm. For the greater part of the time her eyes were closed; her face almost as fixed and passionless as that of a corpse. She no longer took any notice of surrounding objects. There was an awfulness in this tranquillity that filled her friends with apprehension. The physician ordered that she should be kept perfectly quiet; or that, if she evinced any agitation, she should be gently lulled, like a child, by some favourite tune.

She remained in this state for hours, hardly seeming to breathe, and apparently sinking into the sleep of death. Her chamber was profoundly still. The attendants moved about it with noiseless tread; everything was communicated by signs and whispers. Her lover sat by her side with painful anxiety, and fearing that every breath which stole from her pale lips would be the last.

At length she heaved a deep sigh; and from some convulsive motions, appeared to be troubled in her sleep. Her agitation increased, accompanied by an indistinct moaning. One of her companions, remembering the physician's instructions, endeavoured to lull her, singing, in a low voice, a tender little air, which was a particular favourite of Annette's. Probably it had some connexion in her mind with her own story; for every fond girl has some ditty of the kind, linked in her thoughts with sweet and sad remembrances.

As she sang, the agitation of Annette subsided. A streak of faint colour came into her cheeks; her eyelids became swollen with rising tears, which trembled there for a moment, and then stealing forth, coursed down her pallid cheek. When the song was ended, she opened her eyes and looked about her, as one awaking in a strange place.

"Oh, Eugene! Eugene!" said she, "it seems as if I have had a long and dismal dream; what has happened, and what has been the matter with me?"

The questions were embarrassing; and before they could be answered, the physician, who was in the next room, entered. She took him by the hand, looked up in his face, and made the same inquiry. He endeavoured to put her off with some evasive answer;—"No, no!" cried she, "I know I've been ill, and I have been dreaming strangely. I thought Eugene had left us—and that he had gone to sea—and that—and that

he was drowned!—But he *has* been to sea!" added she earnestly, as recollection kept flashing upon her, "and he has been wrecked—and we were all so wretched—and he came home again one bright morning—and——Oh!" said she, pressing her hand against her forehead with a sickly smile, "I see how it is; all has not been right here, I begin to recollect—but it is all past now—Eugene is here! and his mother is happy—and we shall never—never part again—shall we, Eugene?"

She sunk back in her chair exhausted; the tears streamed down her cheeks. Her companions hovered round her, not knowing what to make of this sudden dawn of reason. Her lover sobbed aloud. She opened her eyes again, and looked upon them with an air of the sweetest acknowledgment. "You are all so good to me!" said she, faintly.

The physician drew the father aside. "Your daughter's mind is restored," said he; "she is sensible that she has been deranged; she is growing conscious of the past, and conscious of the present. All that now remains is to keep her calm and quiet until her health is re-established, and then let her be married, in God's name!"

"The wedding took place," continued the good priest, "but a short time since; they were here at the last fête during their honey-moon, and a handsomer and happier couple was not to be seen as they danced under yonder trees. The young man, his wife, and mother, now live on a fine farm at Pont-L'Éveque; and that model of a ship which you see yonder, with white flowers wreathed round it, is Annette's offering of thanks to our Lady of Grace, for having listened to her prayers, and protected her lover in the hour of peril."*

The captain having finished, there was a momentary silence. The tender-hearted Lady Lillycraft, who knew the story by

* Whoever has seen the pathetic ballet of Nina, may be reminded of it by some of the passages in the latter part of the above tale. The story, it is true, was sketched before seeing that ballet; but in re-writing it, the author's memory was haunted by the inimitable performance of Bigotini, in Nina, and the vivid recollection of it may have produced an occasional similarity. He is in some measure prompted to make this acknowledgment, for the purpose of expressing his admiration of the wonderful powers of that actress; who has given a dignity and pathos to the ballet, of which he had not supposed it capable.

heart, had led the way in weeping, and indeed had often begun to shed tears before they had come to the right place.

The fair Julia was a little flurried at the passage where wedding preparations were mentioned; but the auditor most affected was the simple Phœbe Wilkins. She had gradually dropt her work in her lap, and sat sobbing through the latter part of the story, until towards the end, when the happy reverse had nearly produced another scene of hysterics. "Go, take this case to my room, again, child," said Lady Lillycraft, kindly, "and don't cry so much."

"I won't, an't please your ladyship, if I can help it;—but I'm glad they made all up again, and were married!"

By the way, the case of this love-lorn damsel begins to make some talk in the household, especially among certain little ladies, not far in their teens, of whom she has made confidants. She is a great favourite with them all, but particularly so since she has confided to them her love secrets. They enter into her concerns with all the violent zeal and overwhelming sympathy with which little boarding-school ladies engage in the politics of a love affair.

I have noticed them frequently clustering about her in private conferences, or walking up and down the garden terrace under my window, listening to some long and dolorous story of her afflictions; of which I could now and then distinguish the ever-recurring phrases "says he," and "says she."

I accidentally interrupted one of those little councils of war, when they were all huddled together under a tree, and seemed to be earnestly considering some interesting document. The flutter at my approach showed that there were some secrets under discussion; and I observed the disconsolate Phœbe crumpling into her bosom either a love-letter, or an old valentine, and brushing away the tears from her cheeks.

The girl is a good girl, of a soft, melting nature, and shows her concern at the cruelty of her lover only in tears and drooping looks; but with the little ladies who have espoused her cause, it sparkles up into fiery indignation; and I have noticed on Sunday many a glance darted at the pew of the Tibbets's, enough even to melt down the silver buttons on old Ready-Money's jacket.

TRAVELLING.

A citizen, for recreation's sake,
 To see the country would a journey take
 Some dozen mile, or very little more;
 Taking his leave with friends two months before,
 With drinking healths, and shaking by the hand,
 As he had travell'd to some new-found land.

DOCTOR MERRIE-MAN, 1609.

THE squire has lately received another shock in the saddle, and been almost unseated by his marplot neighbour, the indefatigable Mr. Faddy, who rides his jog-trot hobby with equal zeal, and is so bent upon improving and reforming the neighbourhood, that the squire thinks, in a little while, it will be scarce worth living in. The enormity that has just discomposed my worthy host, is an attempt of the manufacturer to have a line of coaches established, that shall diverge from the old route, and pass through the neighbouring village.

I believe I have mentioned that the Hall is situated in a retired part of the country, at a distance from any great coach road; insomuch that the arrival of a traveller is apt to make every one look out of the window, and to cause some talk among the ale-drinkers at the little inn. I was at a loss, therefore, to account for the squire's indignation at a measure apparently fraught with convenience and advantage, until I found that the conveniences of travelling were among his greatest grievances.

In fact, he rails against stage-coaches, post-chaises, and turnpike-roads, as serious causes of the corruption of English rural manners. They have given facilities, he says, to every humdrum citizen to trundle his family about the kingdom, and have sent the follies and fashions of town whirling, in coach-loads, to the remotest parts of the island. 'The whole country, he says, is traversed by these flying cargoes; every by-road is explored by enterprising tourists from Cheapside and the Poultry, and every gentleman's park and lawns invaded by cockney sketchers of both sexes, with portable chairs and portfolios for drawing.

He laments over this as destroying the charm of privacy, and interrupting the quiet of country life; but more especially as affecting the simplicity of the peasantry, and filling their heads with half-city notions. A great coach inn, he says, is enough to ruin the manners of a whole village.

It creates a horde of sots and idlers ; makes gapers and gazers and newsmongers of the common people, and knowing jockeys of the country bumpkins.

The squire has something of the old feudal feeling. He looks back with regret to the "good old times," when journeys were only made on horseback, and the extraordinary difficulties of travelling, owing to bad roads, bad accommodations, and highway robbers, seemed to separate each village and hamlet from the rest of the world. The lord of the manor was then a kind of monarch in the little realm around him. He held his court in his paternal hall, and was looked up to with almost as much loyalty and deference as the king himself. Every neighbourhood was a little world within itself, having its local manners and customs, its local history, and local opinions. The inhabitants were fonder of their homes, and thought less of wandering. It was looked upon as an expedition to travel out of sight of the parish steeple ; and a man that had been to London was a village oracle for the rest of his life.

What a difference between the mode of travelling in those days and at present ! At that time, when a gentleman went on a distant visit, he sallied forth like a knight-errant on an enterprise, and every family excursion was a pageant. How splendid and fanciful must one of those domestic cavalcades have been, where the beautiful dames were mounted on palfreys magnificently caparisoned, with embroidered harness, all tinkling with silver bells ; attended by cavaliers richly attired on prancing steeds, and followed by pages and serving-men, as we see them represented in old tapestry. The gentry, as they travelled about in those days, were like moving pictures. They delighted the eyes and awakened the admiration of the common people, and passed before them like superior beings ; and indeed they were so ; there was a hardy and healthful exercise connected with this equestrian style, that made them generous and noble.

In his fondness for the old style of travelling, the squire makes most of his journeys on horseback, though he laments the modern deficiency of incident on the road from the want of fellow wayfarers, and the rapidity with which every one is whirled along in coaches and post-chaises. In the "good old times," on the contrary, a cavalier jogged on through bog and mire, from town to town, and hamlet to hamlet, conversing with friars and franklens, and all other chance companions of

the road; beguiling the way with travellers' tales, which then were truly wonderful, for everything beyond one's neighbourhood was full of marvel and romance; stopping at night at some "hostel," where the bush over the door proclaimed good wine, or a pretty hostess made bad wine palatable; meeting at supper with travellers like himself; discussing their day's adventures, or listening to the song or merry story of the host, who was generally a boon companion, and presided at his own board; for, according to old Tusser's "Innholder's Posie,"

At meales my friend who vitleth here
And sitteth with his host,
Shall both be sure of better cheere,
And 'scape with lesser cost.

The squire is fond, too, of stopping at those inns which may be met with, here and there, in ancient houses of wood and plaster, or calimanco houses, as they are called by antiquaries, with deep porches, diamond-paned bow-windows, pannelled rooms and great fire-places. He will prefer them to more spacious and modern inns, and will cheerfully put up with bad cheer and bad accommodation in the gratification of his humour. They give him, he says, the feeling of old times, inasmuch that he almost expects, in the dusk of the evening, to see some party of weary travellers ride up to the door, with plumes and mantles, trunk-hose, wide boots, and long rapiers.

The good squire's remarks brought to mind a visit that I once paid to the Tabard Inn, famous for being the place of assemblage from whence Chaucer's pilgrims set forth for Canterbury. It is in the borough of Southwark, not far from London Bridge, and bears at present the name of "The Talbot." It has sadly declined in dignity since the days of Chaucer, being a mere rendezvous and packing place of the great waggons that travel into Kent. The court-yard, which was anciently the mustering-place of the pilgrims previous to their departure, was now lumbered with huge waggons. Crates, boxes, hampers, and baskets, containing the good things of town and country, were piled about them; while, among the straw and litter, the motherly hens scratched and clucked, with their hungry broods at their heels. Instead of Chaucer's motley and splendid throng, I only saw a group of waggoners and stable-boys enjoying a circulating pot of ale; while a long-bodied dog sat by, with head on one side, ear

cocked up, and wistful gaze, as if waiting for his turn at the tankard.

Notwithstanding this grievous declension, however, I was gratified at perceiving that the present occupants were not unconscious of the poetical renown of their mansion. An inscription over the gateway proclaimed it to be the inn where Chaucer's pilgrims slept on the night previous to their departure, and at the bottom of the yard was a magnificent sign representing them in the act of sallying forth. I was pleased, too, at noticing, that though the present inn was comparatively modern, yet the form of the old inn was preserved. There were galleries round the yard, as in old times, on which opened the chambers of the guests. To these ancient inns have antiquaries ascribed the present form of our theatres. Plays were originally acted in inn-yards. The guests lolled over the galleries, which answered to our modern dress-circle; the critical mob clustered in the yard instead of the pit; and the groups gazing from the garret windows were no bad representatives of the gods of the shilling gallery. When, therefore, the drama grew important enough to have a house of its own, the architects took a hint for its construction from the yard of the ancient "hostel."

I was so well pleased at finding these remembrances of Chaucer and his poem, that I ordered my dinner in the little parlour of "The Talbot." Whilst it was preparing, I sat at the window, musing and gazing into the court-yard, and conjuring up recollections of the scenes depicted in such lively colours by the poet, until, by degrees, bales, boxes, and hampers, boys, waggoners, and dogs, faded from sight, and my fancy peopled the place with the motley throng of Canterbury pilgrims. The galleries once more swarmed with idle gazers, in the rich dresses of Chaucer's time, and the whole cavalcade seemed to pass before me. There was the stately knight on sober steed, who had ridden in Christendom and heathenese, and had "foughten for our faith at Tramisene;"—and his son, the young squire, a lover, and a lusty bachelor, with curled locks and gay embroidery; a bold rider, a dancer, and a writer of verses, singing and fluting all day long, and fresh as the "month of May;"—and his "knot-headed" yeoman; a bold forester, in green, with horn, and baudrick, and dagger, a mighty bow in hand, and a sheaf of peacock arrows shining beneath his belt;—and the coy, smiling, simple nun, with her gray eyes, her small red mouth, and fair

forehead, her dainty person clad in featly cloak, and "ypinched wimple," her coral beads about her arm, her golden brooch with a love motto, and her pretty oath "by Saint Eloy;"—and the merchant, solemn in speech and high on horse, with forked beard, and "Flaundrish bever hat;"—and the lusty monk, "full, fat, and in good point," with berry brown palfrey, his hood fastened with gold pin, wrought with a love-knot, his bald head shining like glass, and his face glistening as though it had been anointed;—and the lean, logical, sententious clerke of Oxenforde, upon his half-starved, scholar-like horse:—and the bowsing sompnour, with fiery-cherub face, all knobbed with pimples, an eater of garlick and onions, and drinker of "strong wine, red as blood," that carried a cake for a buckler, and babbled Latin in his cups; of whose brimstone visage "children were sore afeard;"—and the buxom wife of Bath, the widow of five husbands, upon her ambling nag, with her hat broad as a buckler, her red stockings, and sharp spurs;—and the slender, choleric reeve of Norfolk, bestriding his good gray stot, with close-shaven beard, his hair cropped round his ears, long, lean, calfless legs, and a rusty blade by his side,—and the jolly Limitour, with lisping tongue and twinkling eye, well beloved of franklens and housewives, a great promoter of marriages among young women, known at the taverns in every town, and by every "hosteler and gay tapstere." In short, before I was roused from my reverie by the less poetical, but more substantial apparition of a smoking beef-steak, I had seen the whole cavalcade issue from the hostel gate, with the brawny, double-jointed, red-haired miller, playing the bagpipes before them, and the ancient host of "The Tabard" giving them his farewell God-send to Canterbury.

When I told the squire of the existence of this legitimate descendant of the ancient Tabard Inn, his eyes absolutely glistened with delight. He determined to hunt it up the very first time he visited London, and to eat a dinner there, and drink a cup of my host's best wine in memory of old Chaucer. The general, who happened to be present, immediately begged to be of the party, for he liked to encourage these long-established houses, as they are apt to have choice old wines.

POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS.

Farewell, rewards and fairies,
 Good housewives now may say;
 For now fowle sluts in dairies
 Do fare as well as they :
 And though they sweepe their hearths no lesse
 Than maids were wont to doe,
 Yet who of late for cleanlinesse
 Finds sixpence in her shooe ? BISHOP CORBET.

I HAVE mentioned the squire's fondness for the marvellous, and his predilection for legends and romances. His library contains a curious collection of old works of this kind, which bear evident marks of having been much read. In his great love for all that is antiquated, he cherishes popular superstitions, and listens, with very grave attention, to every tale, however strange ; so that, through his countenance, the household, and, indeed, the whole neighbourhood, is well stocked with wonderful stories ; and if ever a doubt is expressed of any one of them, the narrator will generally observe, that the "squire thinks there's something in it."

The Hall, of course, comes in for its share, the common people having always a propensity to furnish a great superannuated building of the kind with supernatural inhabitants. The gloomy galleries of such old family mansions ; the stately chambers adorned with grotesque carvings and faded paintings ; the sounds that vaguely echo about them ; the moaning of the wind ; the cries of rooks and ravens from the trees and chimney-tops ; all produce a state of mind favourable to superstitious fancies.

In one chamber of the Hall, just opposite a door which opens upon a dusky passage, there is a full-length portrait of a warrior in armour ; when, on suddenly turning into the passage. I have caught a sight of the portrait, thrown into strong relief by the dark pannelling against which it hangs, I have more than once been startled, as though it were a figure advancing towards me.

To superstitious minds, therefore, predisposed by the strange and melancholy stories that are connected with family paintings, it needs but little stretch of fancy, on a moonlight night, or by the flickering light of a candle, to set the old pictures on the walls in motion, sweeping in their robes and trains about the galleries.

To tell the truth, the squire confessed that he used to take

a pleasure in his younger days in setting marvellous stories afloat, and connecting them with the lonely and peculiar places of the neighbourhood. Whenever he read any legend of a striking nature, he endeavoured to transplant it, and give it a local habitation among the scenes of his boyhood. Many of these stories took root, and he says he is often amused with the odd shapes in which they come back to him in some old woman's narrative, after they have been circulating for years among the peasantry, and undergoing rustic additions and amendments. Among these may doubtless be numbered that of the crusader's ghost, which I have mentioned in the account of my Christmas visit; and another about the hard-riding squire of yore, the family Nimrod; who is sometimes heard on stormy winter nights, galloping, with hound and horn, over a wild moor a few miles distant from the Hall. This I apprehend to have had its origin in the famous story of the wild huntsman, the favourite goblin in German tales; though, by the by, as I was talking on the subject with Master Simon the other evening in the dark avenue, he hinted, that he had himself once or twice heard odd sounds at night, very like a pack of hounds in cry; and that once, as he was returning rather late from a hunting-dinner, he had seen a strange figure galloping along this same moor; but as he was riding rather fast at the time, and in a hurry to get home, he did not stop to ascertain what it was.

Popular superstitions are fast fading away in England, owing to the general diffusion of knowledge, and the bustling intercourse kept up throughout the country; still they have their strongholds and lingering places, and a retired neighbourhood like this is apt to be one of them. The parson tells me that he meets with many traditional beliefs and notions among the common people, which he has been able to draw from them in the course of familiar conversation, though they are rather shy of avowing them to strangers, and particularly to "the gentry," who are apt to laugh at them. He says there are several of his old parishioners who remember when the village had its bar-guest, or bar-ghost; a spirit supposed to belong to a town or village, and to predict any impending misfortune by midnight shrieks and wailings. The last time it was heard was just before the death of Mr. Bracebridge's father, who was much beloved throughout the neighbourhood; though there are not wanting some obstinate unbelievers, who insisted that it was nothing but the howling of a watch-dog. I have

been greatly delighted, however, at meeting with some traces of my old favourite, Robin Good-fellow, though under a different appellation from any of those by which I have heretofore heard him called. The parson assures me that many of the peasantry believe in household goblins, called Dobbies, which live about particular farms and houses, in the same way that Robin Good-fellow did of old. Sometimes they haunt the barns and out-houses, and now and then will assist the farmer wonderfully, by getting in all his hay or corn in a single night. In general, however, they prefer to live within doors, and are fond of keeping about the great hearths, and basking at night, after the family have gone to bed, by the glowing embers. When put in particular good humour by the warmth of their lodgings, and the tidiness of the housemaids, they will overcome their natural laziness, and do a vast deal of household work before morning; churning the cream, brewing the beer, or spinning all the good dame's flax. All this is precisely the conduct of Robin Good-fellow, described so charmingly by Milton:

Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail had thresh'd the corn
That ten day labourers could not end;
Then lays him down the lubber-fiend,
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full, out of door he flings
Ere the first cock his matin rings.

But beside these household Dobbies, there are others of a more gloomy and unsocial nature, that keep about lonely barns at a distance from any dwelling-house, or about ruins and old bridges. These are full of mischievous, and often malignant tricks, and are fond of playing pranks upon benighted travellers. There is a story, among the old people, of one that haunted a ruined mill, just by a bridge that crosses a small stream; how that late one night, as a traveller was passing on horseback, the Dobbie jumped up behind him, and grasped him so close round the body that he had no power to help himself, but expected to be squeezed to death; luckily his heels were loose, with which he plied the sides of his steed, and was carried, with the wonderful instinct of a traveller's horse, straight to the village inn. Had the inn been at any greater distance, there is no doubt but he would have been

strangled to death; as it was, the good people were a long time in bringing him to his senses, and it was remarked that the first sign he showed of returning consciousness was to call for a bottom of brandy.

These mischievous Dobbies bear much resemblance in their natures and habits to those sprites which Heywood, in his *Heirarchie*, calls pugs or hobgoblins:

— Their dwellings be
In corners of old houses least frequented,
Or beneath stacks of wood, and these convented,
Make fearful noise in butteries and dairies;
Robin Good-fellow some, some call them fairies.
In solitarie rooms these uprores keep,
And beat at doores, to wake men from their sleepe,
Seeming to force lockes, be they nere so strong,
And keeping Christmasse gambols all night long,
Pots, glasses, trenchers, dishes, pannes, and kettles
They will make dance about the shelves and settles,
As if about the kitchen tost and cast,
Yet in the morning nothing found misplac't.
Others such houses to their use have fitted
In which base murthers have been once committed.
Some have their fearful habitations taken
In desolat houses, ruin'd and forsaken.

In the account of our unfortunate hawking expedition, I mentioned an instance of one of these sprites supposed to haunt the ruined grange that stands in a lonely meadow, and has a remarkable echo. The parson informs me also, that the belief was once very prevalent, that a household Dobbie kept about the old farm-house of the Tibbets. It has long been traditional, he says, that one of these good-natured goblins is attached to the Tibbets' family, and came with them when they moved into this part of the country; for it is one of the peculiarities of these household sprites, that they attach themselves to the fortunes of certain families, and follow them in all their removals.

There is a large, old-fashioned fire-place in the farm-house, which affords fine quarters for a chimney-corner sprite that likes to lie warm; especially as Ready-Money Jack keeps up rousing fires in the winter time. The old people of the village recollect many stories about this goblin that were current in their young days. It was thought to have brought good luck to the house, and to be the reason why the Tibbets' were always beforehand in the world, and why their farm was

always in better order, their hay got in sooner, and their corn better stacked than that of their neighbours. The present Mrs. Tibbets, at the time of her courtship, had a number of these stories told her by the country gossips; and when married, was a little fearful about living in a house where such a hobgoblin was said to haunt; Jack, however, who has always treated this story with great contempt, assured her that there was no sprite kept about his house that he could not at any time lay in the Red Sea with one flourish of his cudgel. Still his wife has never got completely over her notions on the subject, but has a horse-shoe nailed on the threshold, and keeps a branch of rauntry, or mountain-ash, with its red berries, suspended from one of the great beams in the parlour,—a sure protection from all evil spirits.

These stories, however, as I before observed, are fast fading away, and in another generation or two will probably be completely forgotten. There is something, however, about these rural superstitions that is extremely pleasing to the imagination; particularly those which relate to the good-humoured race of household demons, and indeed to the whole fairy mythology. The English have given an inexpressible charm to these superstitions, by the manner in which they have associated them with whatever is most homefelt and delightful in rustic life, or refreshing and beautiful in nature. I do not know a more fascinating race of beings than these little fabled people that haunted the southern sides of hills and mountains, lurked in flowers and about fountain-heads, glided through key-holes into ancient halls, watched over farm-houses and dairies, danced on the green by summer moonlight, and on the kitchen hearth in winter. They seem to me to accord with the nature of English housekeeping and English scenery. I always have them in mind when I see a fine old English mansion, with its wide hall and spacious kitchen; or a venerable farm-house, in which there is so much fireside comfort and good housewifery. There was something of national character in their love of order and cleanliness; in the vigilance with which they watched over the economy of the kitchen and the functions of the servant; munificently rewarding, with silver sixpence in shoe, the tidy housemaid; but venting their dreful wrath, in midnight bobs and pinches, upon the sluttish dairy-maid. I think I can trace the good effects of this ancient fairy sway over household concerns, in the care that prevails to the present day among English

housemaids to put their kitchens in order before they go to bed.

I have said, too, that these fairy superstitions seem to me to accord with the nature of English scenery. They suit these small landscapes, which are divided by honeysucked hedges into sheltered fields and meadows, where the grass is mingled with daisies, buttercups, and hare-bells. When I first found myself among English scenery, I was continually reminded of the sweet pastoral images which distinguish their fairy mythology; and when for the first time a circle in the grass was pointed out to me as one of the rings where they were formerly supposed to have held their moonlight revels, it seemed for a moment as if fairy land were no longer a fable. Brown, in his *Britannia's Pastorals*, gives a picture of the kind of scenery to which I allude:

— A pleasant mead
Where fairies often did their measures tread;
Which in the meadows makes such circles green
As if with garlands it had crowned been.
Within one of these rounds was to be seen
A hillock rise, where oft the fairy queen
At twilight sat.

And there is another picture of the same in a poem ascribed to Ben Jonson:

By wells and rills in meadows green
We nightly dance our hey day guise,
And to our fairy king and queen
We chant our moonlight minstrelsies.

Indeed, it seems to me that the older British poets, with that true feeling for nature which distinguishes them, have closely adhered to the simple and familiar imagery which they found in these popular superstitions, and have thus given to their fairy mythology those continual allusions to the farmhouse and the dairy, the green meadow and the fountain-head, that fill our minds with the delightful associations of rural life. It is curious to observe how the most delightful fictions have their origin among the rude and ignorant. There is an indescribable charm about the illusions with which chimerical ignorance once clothed every subject. These twilight views of nature are often more captivating than any which are revealed by the rays of enlightened philosophy. The most accomplished and poetical minds, therefore, have been fain to search back into these accidental conceptions of what

are termed barbarous ages, and to draw from them their finest imagery and machinery. If we look through our most admired poets, we shall find that their minds have been impregnated by these popular fancies, and that those have succeeded best who have adhered closest to the simplicity of their rustic originals. Such is the case with Shakspeare in his *Midsummer Night's Dream*, which so minutely describes the employments and amusements of fairies, and embodies all the notions concerning them which were current among the vulgar. It is thus that poetry in England has echoed back every rustic note, softened into perfect melody; it is thus that it has spread its charms over every-day life, displacing nothing, taking things as it found them, but tinting them up with its own magical hues, until every green hill and fountain-head, every fresh meadow, nay, every humble flower, is full of song and story.

I am dwelling too long, perhaps, upon a threadbare subject; yet it brings up with it a thousand delicious recollections of those happy days of childhood, when the imperfect knowledge I have since obtained had not yet dawned upon my mind, and when a fairy tale was true history to me. I have often been so transported by the pleasure of these recollections, as almost to wish that I had been born in the days when the fictions of poetry were believed. Even now I cannot look upon those fanciful creations of ignorance and credulity, without a lurking regret that they have all passed away. The experience of my early days tells me that they were sources of exquisite delight; and I sometimes question whether the naturalist who can dissect the flowers of the field, receives half the pleasure from contemplating them, that he did who considered them the abodes of elves and fairies. I feel convinced that the true interests and solid happiness of man are promoted by the advancement of truth; yet I cannot but mourn over the pleasant errors which it has trampled down in its progress. The fauns and sylphs, the household sprite, the moonlight revel, Oberon, Queen Mab, and the delicious realms of fairy land, all vanish before the light of true philosophy; but who does not sometimes turn with distaste from the cold realities of morning, and seek to recall the sweet visions of the night?

THE CULPRIT.

From fire, from water, and all things amiss,
 Deliver the house of an honest justice. THE WIDOW.

THE serenity of the Hall has been suddenly interrupted by a very important occurrence. In the course of this morning a posse of villagers was seen trooping up the avenue, with boys shouting in advance. As it drew near, we perceived Ready-Money Jack Tibbets striding along, wielding his cudgel in one hand, and with the other grasping the collar of a tall fellow, whom, on still nearer approach, we recognized for the redoubtable gipsy hero, Star-light Tom. He was, now, however, completely cowed and crest-fallen, and his courage seemed to have quailed in the iron gripe of the lion-hearted Jack.

The whole gang of gipsy women and children came dragging in the rear; some in tears, others making a violent clamour about the ears of old Ready-Money, who, however, trudged on in silence with his prey, heeding their abuse as little as a hawk that has pounced upon a barn-door hero regards the outcries and cacklings of his whole feathered seraglio.

He had passed through the village on his way to the Hall, and of course had made a great sensation in that most excitable place, where every event is a matter of gaze and gossip. The report flew like wildfire that Star-light Tom was in custody. The ale-drinkers forthwith abandoned the tap-room; Slingsby's school broke loose, and master and boys swelled the tide that came rolling at the heels of old Ready-Money and his captive.

The uproar increased as they approached the Hall; it aroused the whole garrison of dogs, and the crew of hangers-on. The great mastiff barked from the dog-house; the stag-hound and the greyhound, and the spaniel, issued barking from the Hall door, and my Lady Lillycraft's little dogs ramped and barked from the parlour window. I remarked, however, that the gipsy dogs made no reply to all these menaces and insults, but crept close to the gang, looking round with a guilty, poaching air, and now and then glancing up a dubious eye to their owners; which shows that the moral dignity, even of dogs, may be ruined by bad company!

When the throng reached the front of the house, they were brought to a halt by a kind of advanced guard, composed of

old Christy, the gamekeeper, and two or three servants of the house, who had been brought out by the noise. The common herd of the village fell back with respect; the boys were driven back by Christy and his compeers; while Ready-Money Jack maintained his ground and his hold of the prisoner, and was surrounded by the tailor, the schoolmaster, and several other dignitaries of the village, and by the clamorous brood of gipsies, who were neither to be silenced nor intimidated.

By this time the whole household were brought to the doors and windows, and the squire to the portal. An audience was demanded by Ready-Money Jack, who had detected the prisoner in the very act of sheep-stealing on his domains, and had borne him off to be examined before the squire, who is in the commission of the peace.

A kind of tribunal was immediately held in the servants' hall, a large chamber, with a stone floor and a long table in the centre at one end of which, just under an enormous clock, was placed the squire's chair of justice, while Master Simon took his place at the table as clerk of the court. An attempt had been made by old Christy to keep out the gipsy gang, but in vain; and they, with the village worthies, and the household, half filled the hall. The old housekeeper and the butler were in a panic at this dangerous irruption. They hurried away all the valuable things and portable articles that were at hand, and even kept a dragon watch on the gipsies, lest they should carry off the house clock or the deal table.

Old Christy, and his faithful coadjutor, the gamekeeper, acted as constables to guard the prisoner, triumphing in having at last got this terrible offender in their clutches. Indeed I am inclined to think the old man bore some peevish recollection of having been handled rather roughly by the gipsy in the chance-medley affair of May-Day.

Silence was now commanded by Master Simon; but it was difficult to be enforced in such a motley assemblage. There was a continual snarling and yelping of dogs, and, as fast as it was quelled in one corner, it broke out in another. The poor gipsy curs, who, like errant thieves, could not hold up their heads in an honest house, were worried and insulted by the gentleman dogs of the establishment, without offering to make resistance; the very curs of my Lady Lillycraft bullied them with impunity.

The examination was conducted with great mildness and indulgence by the squire, partly from the kindness of his nature, and partly, I suspect, because his heart yearned towards the culprit, who had found great favour in his eyes, as I have already observed, from the skill he had at various times displayed in archery, morris dancing, and other obsolete accomplishments. Proofs, however, were too strong. Ready-Money Jack told his story in a straight-forward, independent way, nothing daunted by the presence in which he found himself. He had suffered from various depredations on his sheep-fold and poultry-yard, and had at length kept watch, and caught the delinquent in the very act of making off with a sheep on his shoulders.

Tibbets was repeatedly interrupted, in the course of his testimony, by the culprit's mother, a furious old beldame, with an insufferable tongue, and who, in fact, was several times kept, with some difficulty, from flying at him tooth and nail. The wife, too, of the prisoner, whom I am told he does not beat above half a dozen times a-week, completely interested Lady Lillycraft in her husband's behalf, by her tears and supplications; and several of the other gipsy women were awakening strong sympathy among the young girls and maid-servants in the back-ground. The pretty, black-eyed gipsy girl, whom I have mentioned on a former occasion as the sibyl that read the fortunes of the general, endeavoured to wheedle that doughty warrior into their interests, and even made some approaches to her old acquaintance, Master Simon; but was repelled by the latter with all the dignity of office, having assumed a look of gravity and importance suitable to the occasion.

I was a little surprised, at first, to find honest Slingsby the schoolmaster, rather opposed to his old crony Tibbets, and coming forwards as a kind of advocate for the accused. It seems that he had taken compassion on the forlorn fortunes of Star-light Tom, and had been trying his eloquence in his favour the whole way from the village, but without effect. During the examination of Ready-Money Jack, Slingsby had stood like "dejected Pity at his side," seeking every now and then, by a soft word to soothe any exacerbation of his ire, or to qualify any harsh expression. He now ventured to make a few observations to the squire in palliation of the delinquent's offence; but poor Slingsby spoke more from the heart than the head, and was evidently actuated merely by a general

sympathy for every poor devil in trouble, and a liberal toleration for all kinds of vagabond existence.

The ladies, too, large and small, with the kind-heartedness of their sex, were zealous on the side of mercy, and interceded strenuously with the squire; insomuch that the prisoner, finding himself unexpectedly surrounded by active friends, once more reared his crest, and seemed disposed for a time to put on the air of injured innocence. The squire, however, with all his benevolence of heart, and his lurking weakness towards the prisoner, was too conscientious to swerve from the strict path of justice. There was abundant concurrent testimony that made the proof of guilt incontrovertible, and Star-light Tom's mittimus was made out accordingly.

The sympathy of the ladies was now greater than ever; they even made some attempts to mollify the ire of Ready-Money Jack; but that sturdy potentate had been too much incensed by the repeated incursions that had been made into his territories by the predatory band of Star-light Tom, and he was resolved, he said, to drive the "varmint reptiles" out of the neighbourhood. To avoid all further importunities, as soon as the mittimus was made out, he girded up his loins, and strode back to his seat of empire, accompanied by his interceding friend, Slingsby, and followed by a detachment of the gipsy gang, who hung on his rear, assailing him with mingled prayers and execrations.

The question now was, how to dispose of the prisoner; a matter of great moment in this peaceful establishment, where so formidable a character as Star-light Tom was like a hawk entrapped in a dovecot. As the hubbub and examination had occupied a considerable time, it was too late in the day to send him to the county prison, and that of the village was sadly out of repair from long want of occupation. Old Christy, who took great interest in the affair, proposed that the culprit should be committed for the night to an upper loft of a kind of tower in one of the out-houses, where he and the gamekeeper would mount guard. After much deliberation this measure was adopted; the premises in question were examined and made secure, and Christy and his trusty ally, the one armed with a fowling-piece, the other with an ancient blunderbuss, turned out as sentries to keep watch over this donjon-keep.

Such is the momentous affair that has just taken place, and it is an event of too great moment in this quiet little world,

not to turn it completely topsy-turvy. Labour is at a stand. The house has been a scene of confusion the whole evening. It has been beleaguered by gipsy women, with their children on their backs, wailing and lamenting; while the old virago of a mother has cruised up and down the lawn in front, shaking her head and muttering to herself, or now and then breaking out into a paroxysm of rage, brandishing her fist at the Hall, and denouncing ill luck upon Ready-Money Jack, and even upon the squire himself.

Lady Lillycraft has given repeated audiences to the culprit's weeping wife, at the Hall door; and the servant-maids have stolen out to confer with the gipsy women under the trees. As to the little ladies of the family, they are all outrageous at Ready-Money Jack, whom they look upon in the light of a tyrannical giant of fairy tale. Phoebe Wilkins, contrary to her usual nature, is the only one that is pitiless in the affair. She thinks Mr. Tibbets quite in the right; and thinks the gipsies deserve to be punished severely for meddling with the sheep of the Tibbets's.

In the meantime the females of the family have evinced all the provident kindness of the sex, ever ready to soothe and succour the distressed, right or wrong. Lady Lillycraft has had a mattress taken to the out-house, and comforts and delicacies of all kinds have been taken to the prisoner; even the little girls have sent their cakes and sweetmeats; so that, I'll warrant, the vagabond has never fared so well in his life before. Old Christy, it is true, looks upon every thing with a wary eye; struts about with his blunderbuss with the air of a veteran campaigner, and will hardly allow himself to be spoken to. The gipsy women dare not come within gunshot, and every tatterdemallion of a boy has been frightened from the park. The old fellow is determined to lodge Star-light Tom in prison with his own hands; and hopes, he says, to see one of the poaching crew made an example of.

I doubt, after all, whether the worthy squire is not the greatest sufferer in the whole affair. His honourable sense of duty obliges him to be rigid, but the overflowing kindness of his nature makes this a grievous trial to him.

He is not accustomed to have such demands upon his justice in his truly patriarchal domain; and it wounds his benevolent spirit, that, while prosperity and happiness are flowing in thus bounteously upon him, he should have to inflict misery upon a fellow-being.

He has been troubled and cast down the whole evening; took leave of the family, on going to bed, with a sigh, instead of his usual hearty and affectionate tone, and will, in all probability, have a far more sleepless night than his prisoner. Indeed this unlucky affair has cast a damp upon the whole household, as there appears to be an universal opinion that the unlucky culprit will come to the gallows.

Morning.—The clouds of last evening are all blown over. A load has been taken from the squire's heart, and every face is once more in smiles. The gamekeeper made his appearance at an early hour, completely shame-faced and crest-fallen. Star-light Tom had made his escape in the night; how he had got out of the loft no one could tell; the devil, they think, must have assisted him. Old Christy was so mortified that he would not show his face, but had shut himself up in his stronghold at the dog-kennel, and would not be spoken with. What has particularly relieved the squire is, that there is very little likelihood of the culprit's being retaken, having gone off on one of the old gentleman's best hunters.

FAMILY MISFORTUNES.

The night has been unruly: where we lay,
The chimneys were blown down.

MACBETH.

WE have for a day or two past had a flaw of unruly weather, which has intruded itself into this fair and flowery month, and for a time has quite marred the beauty of the landscape. Last night the storm attained its crisis; the rain beat in torrents against the casements, and the wind piped and blustered about the old Hall with quite a wintry vehemence. The morning, however, dawned clear and serene; the face of the heavens seemed as if newly washed, and the sun shone with a brightness that was undimmed by a single vapour. Nothing overhead gave traces of the recent storm; but on looking from my window, I beheld sad ravage among the shrubs and flowers; the garden walks had formed the channels for little torrents; trees were lopped of their branches, and a small silver stream that wound through the park, and ran at the bottom of the lawn, had swelled into a turbid, yellow sheet of water.

In an establishment like this, where the mansion is vast, ancient, and somewhat afflicted with the infirmities of age,

and where there are numerous and extensive dependencies. a storm is an event of a very grave nature, and brings in its train a multiplicity of cares and disasters.

While the squire was taking his breakfast in the great hall, he was continually interrupted by some bearer of ill tidings from some part or other of his domains; he appeared to me like the commander of a besieged city, after some grand assault, receiving at his head-quarters reports of damages sustained in the various quarters of the place. At one time the housekeeper brought him intelligence of a chimney blown down, and a desperate leak sprung in the roof over the picture gallery, which threatened to obliterate a whole generation of his ancestors. Then the steward came in with a doleful story of the mischief done in the woodlands; while the gamekeeper bemoaned the loss of one of his finest bucks, whose bloated carcase was seen floating along the swollen current of the river.

When the squire issued forth, he was accosted, before the door, by the old paralytic gardener, with a face full of trouble, reporting, as I supposed, the devastation of his flower-beds, and the destruction of his wall-fruit. I remarked, however, that his intelligence caused a peculiar expression of concern, not only with the squire and Master Simon, but with the fair Julia and Lady Lillycraft, who happened to be present. From a few words which reached my ear, I found there was some tale of domestic calamity in the case, and that some unfortunate family had been rendered houseless by the storm. Many ejaculations of pity broke from the ladies; I heard the expressions of "poor helpless beings," and "unfortunate little creatures," several times repeated; to which the old gardener replied by very melancholy shakes of the head.

I felt so interested, that I could not help calling to the gardener, as he was retiring, and asking what unfortunate family it was that had suffered so severely? The old man touched his hat, and gazed at me for an instant, as if hardly comprehending my question. "Family!" replied he; "there be no family in the case, your honour; but there have been sad mischief done in the rookery!"

I had noticed the day before that the high and gusty winds which prevailed had occasioned great disquiet among these airy householders; their nests being all filled with young, who were in danger of being tilted out of their tree-rocked cradles. Indeed, the old birds themselves seemed to have hard work

to maintain a foothold; some kept hovering and cawing in the air; or, if they ventured to alight, they had to hold fast, flap their wings, and spread their tails, and thus remain sec-sawing on the topmost twigs.

In the course of the night, however, an awful calamity had taken place in this most sage and politic community. There was a great tree, the tallest in the grove, which seemed to have been the kind of court-end of the metropolis, and crowded with the residences of those whom Master Simon considers the nobility and gentry. A decayed limb of this tree had given way with the violence of the storm, and had came down with all its air-castles.

One should be well aware of the humours of the good squire and his household, to understand the general concern expressed at this disaster. It was quite a public calamity in this rural empire, and all seemed to feel for the poor rooks as for fellow citizens in distress.

The ground had been strewed with the callow young, which were now cherished in the aprons and bosoms of the maid-servants, and the little ladies of the family. I was pleased with this touch of nature; this feminine sympathy in the sufferings of the offspring, and the maternal anxiety of the parent birds.

It was interesting, too, to witness the general agitation and distress that seemed to prevail throughout the feathered community; the common cause that was made of it, and the incessant hovering, and fluttering, and lamenting, that took place in the whole rookery. There is a chord of sympathy that runs through the whole feathered race as to any misfortunes of the young; and the cries of a wounded bird in the breeding season will throw a whole grove in a flutter and an alarm. Indeed, why should I confine it to the feathered tribe? Nature seems to me to have implanted an exquisite sympathy on this subject, which extends through all her works. It is an invariable attribute of the female heart to melt at the cry of early helplessness, and to take an instinctive interest in the distresses of the parent and its young. On the present occasion the ladies of the family were full of pity and commiseration; and I shall never forget the look that Lady Lillycraft gave the general, on his observing that the young birds would make an excellent curry, or an especial good rook-pie.

LOVERS' TROUBLES.

The poor soul sat singing by a sycamore tree,
 Sing all a green willow ;
 Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
 Sing willow, willow, willow ;
 Sing all a green willow must be my garland.

OLD SONG.

THE fair Julia having nearly recovered from the effects of her hawking disaster, it begins to be thought high time to appoint a day for the wedding. As every domestic event in a venerable and aristocratic family connection like this is a matter of moment, the fixing upon this important day has, of course, given rise to much conference and debate.

Some slight difficulties and demurs have lately sprung up, originating in the peculiar humours that are prevalent at the Hall. Thus, I have overheard a very solemn consultation between Lady Lillycraft, the parson, and Master Simon, as to whether the marriage ought not to be postponed until the coming month.

With all the charms of the flowery month of May, there is, I find, an ancient prejudice against it as a marrying month. An old proverb says, "To wed in May, is to wed poverty." Now, as Lady Lillycraft is very much given to believe in lucky and unlucky times and seasons, and indeed is very superstitious on all points relating to the tender passion, this old proverb seems to have taken great hold upon her mind. She recollects two or three instances in her own knowledge of matches that took place in this month, and proved very unfortunate. Indeed, an own cousin of hers, who married on a May-day, lost her husband by a fall from his horse, after they had lived happily together for twenty years.

The parson appeared to give great weight to her ladyship's objections, and acknowledged the existence of a prejudice of the kind, not merely confined to modern times, but prevalent likewise among the ancients. In confirmation of this, he quoted a passage from Ovid, which had a great effect on Lady Lillycraft, being given in a language which she did not understand. Even Master Simon was staggered by it; for he listened with a puzzled air, and then, shaking his head, sagaciously observed, that Ovid was certainly a very wise man.

From this sage conference I likewise gathered several other important pieces of information relative to weddings; such as that ~~if~~ two were celebrated in the same church on the same

day, the first would be happy, the second unfortunate. If, on going to church, the bridal party should meet the funeral of a female, it was an omen that the bride would die first; if of a male, the bridegroom. If the newly-married couple were to dance together on their wedding-day, the wife would thenceforth rule the roast; with many other curious and unquestionable facts of the same nature, all which made me ponder more than ever upon the perils which surround this happy state, and the thoughtless ignorance of mortals as to the awful risks they run in entering upon it. I abstain, however, from enlarging upon this topic, having no inclination to promote the increase of bachelors.

Notwithstanding the due weight which the squire gives to traditional saws and ancient opinions, yet I am happy to find that he makes a firm stand for the credit of this loving month, and brings to his aid a whole legion of poetical authorities; all which, I presume, have been conclusive with the young couple, as I understand they are perfectly willing to marry in May, and abide the consequences. In a few days, therefore, the wedding is to take place, and the Hall is in a buzz of anticipation. The housekeeper is bustling about from morning till night, with a look full of business and importance, having a thousand arrangements to make, the squire intending to keep open house on the occasion; and as to the housemaids, you cannot look one of them in the face, but the rogue begins to colour up and simper.

While, however, this leading love affair is going on with a tranquillity quite inconsistent with the rules of romance, I cannot say that the under-plots are equally propitious. The "opening bud of love" between the general and Lady Lillycraft seems to have experienced some blight in the course of this genial season. I do not think the general has ever been able to retrieve the ground he lost when he fell asleep during the captain's story. Indeed, Master Simon thinks his case is completely desperate, her ladyship having determined that he is quite destitute of sentiment.

The season has been equally unpropitious to the love-thorn Phœbe Wilkins. I fear the reader will be impatient at having this humble amour so often alluded to; but I confess I am apt to take a great interest in the love troubles of simple girls of this class. Few people have an idea of the world of care and perplexity that these poor damsels have in managing the affairs of the heart.

We talk and write about the tender passion ; we give it all the colourings of sentiment and romance, and lay the scene of its influence in high life ; but, after all, I doubt whether its sway is not more absolute among females of a humbler sphere. How often, could we but look into the heart, should we find the sentiment throbbing in all its violence, in the bosom of the poor lady's maid, rather than in that of the brilliant beauty she is decking out for conquest ; whose brain is probably bewildered with beaux, ball-rooms, and wax-light chandeliers.

With these humble beings love is an honest, engrossing concern. They have no ideas of settlements, establishments, equipages, and pin-money. The heart—the heart—is all-in-all with them, poor things ! There is seldom one of them but has her love cares, and love secrets ; her doubts, and hopes, and fears, equal to those of any heroine of romance, and ten times as sincere. And then, too, there is her secret hoard of love documents ;—the broken sixpence, the gilded brooch, the lock of hair, the unintelligible love scrawl, all treasured up in her box of Sunday finery, for private contemplation.

How many crosses and trials is she exposed to from some lynx-eyed dame, or staid old vestal of a mistress, who keeps a dragon watch over her virtue, and scouts the lover from the door ! But then, how sweet are the little love scenes, snatched at distant intervals of holiday, fondly dwelt on through many a long day of household labour and confinement ! If in the country, it is the dance at the fair or wake, the interview in the churchyard after service, or the evening stroll in the green lane. If in town, it is perhaps merely a stolen moment of delicious talk between the bars of the area, fearful every instant of being seen ; and then, how lightly will the simple creature carol all day afterwards at her labour !

Poor baggage ! after all her crosses and difficulties, when she marries, what is it but to exchange a life of comparative ease and comfort for one of toil and uncertainty ? Perhaps, too, the lover, for whom, in the fondness of her nature, she has committed herself to fortune's freaks, turns out a worthless churl, the dissolute, hard-hearted husband of low life ; who, taking to the alehouse, leaves her to a cheerless home, to labour, penury, and child-bearing.

When I see poor Phoebe going about with drooping eye, and her head hanging "all o' one side," I cannot help calling to mind the pathetic little picture drawn by Desdemona :—

My mother had a maid, called Barbara ;
She was in love ; and he she loved proved mad,
And did forsake her ; she had a song of willow,
An old thing 'twas ; but it express'd her fortune,
And she died singing it.

I hope, however, that a better lot is in reserve for Phoebe Wilkins, and that she may yet "rule the roast," in the ancient empire of the Tibbets ! She is not fit to battle with hard hearts or hard times. She was, I am told, the pet of her poor mother, who was proud of the beauty of her child, and brought her up more tenderly than a village girl ought to be ; and ever since she has been left an orphan, the good ladies at the Hall have completed the softening and spoiling of her.

I have recently observed her holding long conferences in the churchyard, and up and down one of the lanes near the village, with Slingsby, the schoolmaster. I at first thought the pedagogue might be touched with the tender malady so prevalent in these parts of late ; but I did him injustice. Honest Slingsby, it seems, was a friend and crony of her late father, the parish clerk ; and is on intimate terms with the Tibbets family. Prompted, therefore, by his good-will towards all parties, and secretly instigated, perhaps, by the managing dame Tibbets, he has undertaken to talk with Phoebe upon the subject. He gives her, however, but little encouragement. Slingsby has a formidable opinion of the aristocratical feeling of old Ready-Money, and thinks, if Phoebe were even to make the matter up with the soft, she would find the father totally hostile to the match. The poor damsel, therefore, is reduced almost to despair ; and Slingsby, who is too good-natured not to sympathize in her distress, has advised her to give up all thoughts of young Jack, and has promised as a substitute his learned coadjutor, the prodigal son. He has even, in the fulness of his heart, offered to give up the school-house to them, though it would leave him once more adrift in the wide world.

THE HISTORIAN.

Hermione. Pray you sit by us,
And tell 's a tale.
Mamilius. Merry, or sad shall 't be ?
Hermione. As merry as you will.

Mamilius. A sad tale 's best for winter.
I have one of sprites and goblins.
Hermione. Let 's have that, sir.

WINTER'S TALE.

As this is a story-telling age, I have been tempted occasionally to give the reader one of the many tales that are served up with supper at the Hall. I might, indeed, have furnished a series almost equal in number to the Arabian Nights; but some were rather hackneyed and tedious; others I did not feel warranted in betraying into print; and many more were of the old general's relating, and turned principally upon tiger-hunting, elephant-riding, and Seringapatam, enlivened by the wonderful deeds of Tippoo Saib, and the excellent jokes of Major Pendergast.

I had all along maintained a quiet post at a corner of the table, where I had been able to indulge my humour undisturbed; listening attentively when the story was very good, and dozing a little when it was rather dull, which I consider the perfection of auditorship.

I was roused the other evening from a slight trance into which I had fallen during one of the general's histories, by a sudden call from the squire to furnish some entertainment of the kind in my turn. Having been so profound a listener to others, I could not in conscience refuse; but neither my memory nor invention being ready to answer so unexpected a demand, I begged leave to read a manuscript tale from the pen of my fellow-countryman, the late Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker, the historian of New York. As this ancient chronicler may not be better known to my readers than he was to the company at the Hall, a word or two concerning him may not be amiss, before proceeding to his manuscript.

Diedrich Knickerbocker was a native of New York, a descendant from one of the ancient Dutch families which originally settled in that province, and remained there after it was taken possession of by the English in 1664. The descendants of these Dutch families still remain in villages and neighbourhoods in various parts of the country, retaining, with singular obstinacy, the dresses, manners, and even language of their ancestors, and forming a very distinct and curious feature in the motley population of the state. In a hamlet, whose spire may be seen from New York, rising above the brow of a hill on the opposite side of the Hudson, many of the old folks, even at the present day, speak English

with an accent, and the dominie preaches in Dutch; and so completely is the hereditary love of quiet and silence maintained, that in one of those drowsy little villages, in the middle of a warm summer's day, the buzzing of a stout blue-bottle fly will resound from one end of the place to the other.

With the laudable hereditary feeling thus kept up among these worthy people, did Mr. Knickerbocker undertake to write a history of his native city, comprising the reign of its three Dutch governors during the time that it was yet under the domination of the Hogenmogens of Holland. In the execution of this design the little Dutchman has displayed great historical research, and a wonderful consciousness of the dignity of his subject. His work, however, has been so little understood, as to be pronounced a mere work of humour, satirising the follies of the times, both in politics and morals, and giving whimsical views of human nature.

Be that as it may;—among the papers left behind him were several tales of a lighter nature, apparently thrown together from materials which he had gathered during his profound researches for his history, and which he seems to have cast by with neglect, as unworthy of publication. Some of these have fallen into my hands by an accident which it is needless at present to mention; and one of these very stories, with its prelude in the words of Mr. Knickerbocker, I undertook to read, by way of acquitting myself of the debt which I owe to the other story-tellers at the Hall. I subjoin it for such of my readers as are fond of stories.*

* I find that the tale of Rip Van Winkle, given in the Sketch Book, has been discovered by divers writers in magazines, to have been founded on a little German tradition, and the matter has been revealed to the world as if it were a foul instance of plagiarism marvellously brought to light. In a note which follows that tale I had alluded to the superstition on which it was founded, and I thought a mere allusion was sufficient, as the tradition was so notorious as to be inserted in almost every collection of German legends. I had seen it myself in three. I could hardly have hoped, therefore, in the present age, when every source of ghost and goblin story is ransacked, that the origin of the tale would escape discovery. In fact, I had considered popular traditions of the kind as fair foundations for authors of fiction to build upon, and had made use of the one in question accordingly. I am not disposed to contest the matter, however, and indeed consider myself so completely overpaid by the public for my trivial performances, that I am content to submit to any deduction which, in their afterthoughts, they may think proper to make.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

FROM THE MSS. OF THE LATE DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER.

Formerly almost every place had a house of this kind. If a house was seated on some melancholy place, or built in some old romantic manner, or if any particular accident had happened in it, such as murder, sudden death, or the like, to be sure that house had a mark set on it, and was afterwards esteemed the habitation of a ghost.

BOURNE'S ANTIQUITIES.

IN the neighbourhood of the ancient city of the Manhattoes there stood, not very many years since, an old mansion, which, when I was a boy, went by the name of the Haunted House. It was one of the very few remains of the architecture of the early Dutch settlers, and must have been a house of some consequence at the time when it was built. It consisted of a centre and two wings, the gable ends of which were shaped like stairs. It was built partly of wood and partly of small Dutch bricks, such as the worthy colonists brought with them from Holland, before they discovered that bricks could be manufactured elsewhere. The house stood remote from the road, in the centre of a large field, with an avenue of old locust* trees leading up to it, several of which had been shivered by lightning, and two or three blown down. A few apple trees grew straggling about the field; there were traces also of what had been a kitchen garden; but the fences were broken down, the vegetables had disappeared, or had grown wild and turned to little better than weeds, with here and there a ragged rose-bush, or a tall sunflower shooting up from among brambles, and hanging its head sorrowfully, as if contemplating the surrounding desolation. Part of the roof of the old house had fallen in, the windows were shattered, the pannels of the doors broken, and mended with rough boards, and there were two rusty weathercocks of the ends of the house, which made a great jingling and whistling as they whirled about, but always pointed wrong. The appearance of the whole place was forlorn and desolate at the best of times; but, in unruly weather, the howling of the wind about the crazy old mansion, the screeching of the weathercocks, the slamming and banging of a few loose window shutters, had altogether so wild and dreary an effect that the neighbourhood stood perfectly in awe of the place, and pronounced it the rendezvous of hobgoblins. I recollect

* Acacias.

the old building well ; for I remember how many times when an idle, unlucky urchin, I have prowled round its precincts, with some of my graceless companions, on holiday afternoons, when out on a freebooting cruise among the orchards. There was a tree standing near the house that bore the most beautiful and tempting fruit ; but then it was on enchanted ground, for the place was so charmed by frightful stories that we dreaded to approach it. Sometimes we would venture in a body, and get near the Hesperian tree, keeping an eye upon the old mansion, and darting fearful glances into its shattered windows ; when, just as we were about to seize upon our prize, an exclamation from some one of the gang, or an accidental noise, would throw us all into a panic, and we would scamper headlong from the place, nor stop until we had got quite into the road. Then there was sure to be a host of fearful anecdotes told of strange cries and groans, or some hideous face suddenly seen staring out of one of the windows. By degrees we ceased to venture into these lonely grounds, but would stand at a distance and throw stones at the building ; and there was something fearfully pleasing in the sound as they rattled along the roof, or sometimes struck some jingling fragments of glass out of the windows.

The origin of this house was lost in the obscurity that covers the early period of the province, while under the government of their High Mightinesses the States-General. Some reported it to have been a country residence of Wilhelmus Kieft, commonly called the Testy, one of the Dutch governors of New Amsterdam ; others said that it had been built by a naval officer who served under Van Tromp, and who, on being disappointed of preferment, retired from the service in disgust, became a philosopher through sheer spite, and brought over all his wealth to the province, that he might live according to his humour, and despise the world. The reason of its having fallen to decay was likewise a matter of dispute : some said that it was in Chancery, and had already cost more than its worth in legal expenses ; but the most current, and, of course, the most probable account was, that it was haunted, and that nobody could live quietly in it. There can, in fact, be very little doubt that this last was the case, there were so many corroborating stories to prove it,—not an old woman in the neighbourhood but could furnish at least a score. There was a gray-headed curmudgeon of a negro that lived hard by, who had a whole budget of them to tell, many of which had hap-

pened to himself. I recollect many a time stopping with my schoolmates, and getting him to relate some. The old crone lived in a hovel, in the midst of a small patch of potatoes and Indian corn, which his master had given him on setting him free. He would come to us, with his hoe in his hand, and, as we sat perched, like a row of swallows, on the rails of the fence, in the mellow twilight of a summer evening, he would tell us such fearful stories, accompanied by such awful rollings of his white eyes, that we were almost afraid of our own footsteps as we returned home afterwards in the dark.

Poor old Pompey! many years are past since he died, and went to keep company with the ghosts he was so fond of talking about. He was buried in a corner of his own little potato patch; the plough soon passed over his grave, and levelled it with the rest of the field, and nobody thought any more of the gray-headed negro. By singular chance I was strolling in that neighbourhood several years afterwards, when I had grown up to be a young man, and I found a knot of gossips speculating on a skull which had just been turned up by a ploughshare. They of course determined it to be the remains of some one that had been murdered, and they had raked up with it some of the traditionary tales of the Haunted House. I knew it at once to be the relic of poor Pompey, but I held my tongue; for I am too considerate of other people's enjoyment ever to mar a story of a ghost or a murder. I took care, however, to see the bones of my old friend once more buried in a place where they were not likely to be disturbed. As I sat on the turf and watched the interment, I fell into a long conversation with an old gentleman of the neighbourhood, John Josse Vandermoere, a pleasant gossiping man, whose whole life was spent in hearing and telling the news of the province. He recollected old Pompey, and his stories about the Haunted House; but he assured me he could give me one still more strange than any that Pompey had related; and on my expressing a great curiosity to hear it, he sat down beside me on the turf, and told the following tale. I have endeavoured to give it as nearly as possible in his words; but it is now many years since, and I am grown old, and my memory is not over good. I cannot, therefore, vouch for the language, but I am always scrupulous as to facts.

D. K.

DOLPH HEYLIGER.

I take the town of Concord, where I dwell,
 All Kilborn be my witness, if I were not
 Begot in bashfulness, brought up in shamefacedness:
 Let 'un bring a dog but to my vace that can
 Zay I have beat 'un, and without a vault;
 Or but a cat will swear upon a book,
 I have as much as zet a vire her tail,
 And I'll give him or her a crown for 'mends.

TALE OF A TUB.

In the early time of the province of New York, while it groaned under the tyranny of the English governor, Lord Cornbury, who carried his cruelties towards the Dutch inhabitants so far as to allow no dominie or schoolmaster to officiate in their language without his special license; about this time there lived in the jolly little old city of the Manhattoes a kind, motherly dame, known by the name of Dame Heyliger. She was the widow of a Dutch sea-captain, who died suddenly of a fever, in consequence of working too hard, and eating too heartily, at the time when all the inhabitants turned out in a panic to fortify the place against the invasion of a small French privateer.* He left her with very little money, and one infant son, the only survivor of several children. The good woman had need of much management to make both ends meet, and keep up a decent appearance. However, as her husband had fallen a victim to his zeal for the public safety, it was universally agreed that "something ought to be done for the widow;" and on the hopes of this "something," she lived tolerably for some years; in the meantime everybody pitied and spoke well of her, and that helped along.

She lived in a small house, in a small street, called Garden Street, very probably from a garden which may have flourished there some time or other. As her necessities every year grew greater, and the talk of the public about doing "something for her" grew less, she had to cast about for some mode of doing something for herself by way of helping out her slender means, and maintaining her independence, of which she was somewhat tenacious.

Living in a mercantile town, she had caught something of the spirit, and determined to venture a little in the great

lottery of commerce. On a sudden, therefore, to the great surprise of the street, there appeared at her window a grand array of ginger-bread kings and queens, with their arms stuck a-kimbo, after the invariable royal manner. There were also several broken tumblers, some filled with sugar-plums, some with marbles; there were, moreover, cakes of various kinds, and barley-sugar, and Holland dolls, and wooden horses, with here and there gilt-covered picture-books, and now and then a skein of thread, or a dangling pound of candles. At the door of the house sat the good old dame's cat, a decent, demure-looking personage, that seemed to scan every body that passed, to criticise their dress, and now and then to stretch her neck, and look out with sudden curiosity, to see what was going on at the other end of the street; but if by chance any idle vagabond dog came by, and offered to be uncivil—hoity-toity!—how she would bristle up and growl, and spit, and strike out her paws! she was as indignant as ever was an ancient and ugly spinster on the approach of some graceless profligate.

But though the good woman had to come down to these humble means of subsistence, yet she still kept up a feeling of family pride, having descended from the Vanderspiegels of Amsterdam; and she had the family arms painted and framed, and hung over her mantel-piece. She was, in truth, much respected by all the poorer people of the place; her house was quite a resort of the old wives of the neighbourhood; they would drop in there of a winter's afternoon, as she sat knitting on one side of her fire-place, her cat purring on the other, and the tea-kettle singing before it; and they would gossip with her until late in the evening. There was always an arm-chair for Peter de Groodt, sometimes called Long Peter, and sometimes Peter Longlegs, the clerk and sexton of the little Lutheran church, who was her great crony, and indeed the oracle of her fireside. Nay, the dominie himself did not disdain, now and then, to step in, converse about the state of her mind, and take a glass of her special good cherry-brandy. Indeed, he never failed to call on New Year's Day, and wish her a happy new year; and the good dame, who was a little vain on some points, always piqued herself on giving him as large a cake as any one in town.

I have said that she had one son. He was the child of her old age; but could hardly be called the comfort, for, of all unlucky urchins, Dolph Heyliger was the most mischievous

Not that the whipster was really vicious; he was only full of fun and frolic, and had that daring, gamesome spirit, which is extolled in a rich man's child, but execrated in a poor man's. He was continually getting into scrapes; his mother was incessantly harassed with complaints of some waggish pranks which he had played off: bills were sent in for windows that he had broken; in a word, he had not reached his fourteenth year before he was pronounced by all the neighbourhood to be a "wicked dog, the wickedest dog in the street!" Nay, one old gentleman, in a claret-coloured coat, with a thin red face, and ferret eyes, went so far as to assure Dame Heyliger that her son would, one day or other, come to the gallows!

Yet, notwithstanding all this, the poor old soul loved her boy. It seemed as though she loved him the better the worse he behaved; and that he grew more in her favour the more he grew out of favour with the world. Mothers are foolish, fond-hearted beings; there's no reasoning them out of their dotage, and, indeed, this poor woman's child was all that was left to love her in this world; so we must not think it hard that she turned a deaf ear to her good friends, who sought to prove to her that Dolph would come to a halter.

To do the varlet justice, too, he was strongly attached to his parent. He would not willingly have given her pain on any account; and when he had been doing wrong, it was but for him to catch his poor mother's eye fixed wistfully and sorrowfully upon him, to fill his heart with bitterness and contrition. But he was a heedless youngster, and could not, for the life of him, resist any new temptation to fun and mischief. Though quick at his learning, whenever he could be brought to apply himself, yet he was always prone to be led away by idle company, and would play truant to hunt after birds' nests, to rob orchards, or to swim in the Hudson.

In this way he grew up a tall, lubberly boy; and his mother began to be greatly perplexed what to do with him, or how to put him in a way to do for himself, for he had acquired such an unlucky reputation, that no one seemed willing to employ him.

Many were the consultations that she held with Peter Groodt, the clerk and sexton, who was her prime councillor. ^{mean-}ter was as much perplexed as herself, for he had no great ^{some-} opinion of the boy, and thought he would never come to good. ^{live-} one time advised her to send him to sea; a piece of ^{the spin-}only given in the most desperate cases; but Dame

Heyliger would not listen to such an idea, she could not think of letting Dolph go out of her sight. She was sitting one day knitting by her fireside, in great perplexity, when the sexton entered with an air of unusual vivacity and briskness. He had just come from a funeral. It had been that of a boy of Dolph's years, who had been apprenticed to a famous German doctor, and died of a consumption. It is true there had been a whisper that the deceased had been brought to his end by being made the subject of the doctor's experiments, on which he was apt to try the effects of a new compound, or a quieting draught. This, however, it was likely, was a mere scandal; at any rate, Peter de Groodt did not think it worth mentioning, though, had we time to philosophise, it would be a curious matter for speculation, why a doctor's family is apt to be so lean and cadaverous, and a butcher's so jolly and rubicund.

Peter de Groodt, as I said before, entered the house of Dame Heyliger with unusual alacrity. He was full of a bright idea that had popped into his head at the funeral, and over which he had chuckled as he shovelled the earth into the grave of the doctor's disciple. It had occurred to him that, as the situation of the deceased was vacant at the doctor's, it would be the very place for Dolph. The boy had parts, and could pound a pestle, and run an errand with any boy in the town, and what more was wanted in a student?

The suggestion of the sage Peter was a vision of glory to the mother. "She already saw Dolph, in her mind's eye, with a cane at his nose, a knocker at his door, and an M.D. at the end of his name—one of the established dignitaries of the town.

The matter, once undertaken, was soon effected; the sexton had some influence with the doctor, they having had much dealing together in the way of their separate professions; and the very next morning he called and conducted the urchin, clad in his Sunday clothes, to undergo the inspection of Dr. Karl Lodovick Knipperhausen.

They found the doctor seated in an elbow-chair in one corner of his study or laboratory, with a large volume, in German print, before him. He was a short, fatman, with a dark square face, rendered more dark by a black velvet cap. He had a little knobbed nose, not unlike the ace of spades, with a pair of spectacles gleaming on each side of his dusky countenance, like a couple of bow windows.

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this learned man, and gazed about him with boyish wonder at the furniture of this chamber of knowledge; which appeared to him almost as the den of a magician. In the centre stood a claw-footed table, with pestle and mortar, phials and gallipots, and a pair of small burnished scales. At one end was a heavy clothes-press, turned into a receptacle for drugs and compounds; against which hung the doctor's hat and cloak, and gold-headed cane, and on the top grinned a human skull. Along the mantel-piece were glass vessels, in which were snakes and lizards, and a human foetus preserved in spirits. A closet, the doors of which were taken off, contained three whole shelves of books, and some too, of mighty folio dimensions; a collection, the like of which Dolph had never before beheld. As, however, the library did not take up the whole of the closet, the doctor's thrifty housekeeper had occupied the rest with pots of pickles and preserves; and had hung about the room, among awful implements of the healing art, strings of red pepper and corpulent cucumbers, carefully preserved for seed.

Peter de Groodt, and his protégé, were received with great gravity and stateliness by the doctor, who was a very wise, dignified little man, and never smiled. He surveyed Dolph from head to foot, above, and under, and through his spectacles, and the poor lad's heart quailed as these great glasses glared on him like two full moons. The doctor heard all that Peter de Groodt had to say in favour of the youthful candidate; and then, wetting his thumb with the end of his tongue, he began deliberately to turn over page after page of the great black volume before him. At length, after many hums and haws, and strokings of the chin, and all that hesitation and deliberation with which a wise man proceeds to do what he intended to do from the very first, the doctor agreed to take the lad as a disciple; to give him bed, board, and clothing, and to instruct him in the healing art: in return for which he was to have his services until his twenty-first year.

Behold, then, our hero all at once transformed from an unlucky urchin, running wild about the streets, to a student of medicine, diligently pounding a pestle, under the auspices of the learned Doctor Karl Lodovick Knipperhausen. It was a happy transition for his fond old mother. She was delighted with the idea of her boy's being brought up worthy of his ancestors; and anticipated the day when he would be able to hold up his head with the lawyer, that lived in the large house opposite; or, peradventure, with the dominie himself.

Doctor Knipperhausen was a native of the Palatinate in Germany; from whence, in company with many of his countrymen, he had taken refuge in England, on account of religious persecution. He was one of nearly three thousand Palatines, who came over from England in 1710, under the protection of Governor Hunter. Where the doctor had studied, how he had acquired medical knowledge, and where he had received his diploma, it is hard at present to say, for nobody knew at the time; yet it is certain that his profound skill and abstruse knowledge were the talk and wonder of the common people, far and near.

His practice was totally different from that of any other physician; consisting in mysterious compounds, known only to himself, in the preparing and administering of which, it was said, he always consulted the stars. So high an opinion was entertained of his skill, particularly by the German and Dutch inhabitants, that they always resorted to him in desperate cases. He was one of those infallible doctors, that are always effecting sudden and surprising cures, when the patient has been given up by all the regular physicians; unless, as is shrewdly observed, the case has been left too long before it was put into their hands. The doctor's library was the talk and marvel of the neighbourhood, I might almost say, of the entire burgh. The good people looked with reverence at a man that had read three whole shelves full of books, and some of them, too, as large as a family Bible. There were many disputes among the members of the little Lutheran church, as to which was the wisest man, the doctor or the dominie. Some of his admirers even went so far as to say, that he knew more than the governor himself—in a word, it was thought that there was no end to his knowledge!

No sooner was Dolph received into the doctor's family, than he was put in possession of the lodging of his predecessor. It was a garret-room of a steep-roofed Dutch house, where the rain pattered on the shingles, and the lightning gleamed, and the wind piped through the crannies in stormy weather; and where whole troops of hungry rats, like Don Cossacks, galloped about, in defiance of traps and ratsbane.

He was soon up to his ears in medical studies, being employed, morning, noon, and night, in rolling pills, filtering tinctures, or pounding the pestle and mortar in one corner of the laboratory; while the doctor would take his seat in another corner, when he had nothing else to do, or expected visitors,

and, arrayed in his morning gown and velvet cap, would pore over the contents of some folio volume. It is true, that the regular thumping of Dolph's pestle, or, perhaps, the drowsy buzzing of the summer flies, would now and then lull the little man into a slumber; but then his spectacles were always wide awake, and studiously regarding the book.

There was another personage in the house, however, to whom Dolph was obliged to pay allegiance. Though a bachelor, and a man of such great dignity and importance, yet the doctor was, like many other wise men, subject to petticoat government. He was completely under the sway of his housekeeper; a spare, busy, fretting housewife, in a little, round, quilted German cap, with a huge bunch of keys jingling at the girdle of an exceedingly long waist. Frau Isé (or Frow Ilsy as it was pronounced) had accompanied him in his various migrations from Germany to England, and from England to the province; managing his establishment and himself too; ruling him, it is true, with a gentle hand, but carrying a high hand with all the world beside. How she had acquired such ascendancy I do not pretend to say. People, it is true, did talk—but have not people been prone to talk ever since the world began? Who can tell how women generally contrive to get the upper hand? A husband, it is true, may now and then be master in his own house; but who ever knew a bachelor that was not managed by his housekeeper?

Indeed, Frau Ilsy's power was not confined to the doctor's household. She was one of those prying gossips that know every one's business better than they do themselves; and whose all-seeing eyes, and all-telling tongues, are terrors throughout a neighbourhood.

Nothing of any moment transpired in the world of scandal of this little burgh, but it was known to Frau Ilsy. She had her crew of cronies, that were perpetually hurrying to her little parlour with some precious bit of news; nay, she would sometimes discuss a whole volume of secret history, as she held the street-door ajar, and gossiped with one of those garrulous cronies in the very teeth of a December blast.

Between the doctor and the housekeeper it may easily be supposed that Dolph had a busy life of it. As Frau Ilsy kept the keys, and literally ruled the roast, it was starvation to offend her, though he found the study of her temper more perplexing even than that of medicine. When not busy in the laboratory, she kept him running hither and thither on her

errands; and on Sundays he was obliged to accompany her to and from church, and carry her Bible. Many a time has the poor varlet stood shivering and blowing his fingers, or holding his frost-bitten nose, in the churchyard, while Ilsy and her cronies were huddled together, wagging their heads, and tearing some unlucky character to pieces.

With all his advantages, however, Dolph made very slow progress in his art. This was no fault of the doctor's, certainly, for he took unwearied pains with the lad, keeping him close to the pestle and mortar, or on the trot about town with phials and pill-boxes; and if he ever flagged in his industry, which he was rather apt to do, the doctor would fly into a passion, and ask him if he ever expected to learn his profession, unless he applied himself closer to his study. The fact is, he still retained the fondness for sport and mischief that had marked his childhood; the habit, indeed, had strengthened with his years, and gained force from being thwarted and constrained. He daily grew more and more untractable, and lost favour in the eyes both of the doctor and the housekeeper.

In the meantime the doctor went on waxing wealthy and renowned. He was famous for his skill in managing cases not laid down in the books. He had cured several old women and young girls of witchcraft;—a terrible complaint, nearly as prevalent in the province in those days as hydrophobia is at present. He had even restored one strapping country girl to perfect health, who had gone so far as to vomit crooked pins and needles; which is considered a desperate stage of the malady. It was whispered, also, that he was possessed of the art of preparing love-powders; and many applications had he in consequence from love-sick patients of both sexes. But all these cases formed the mysterious part of his practice, in which, according to the cant phrase, "secrecy and honour might be depended on." Dolph, therefore, was obliged to turn out of the study whenever such consultations occurred, though it is said he learnt more of the secrets of the art at the key-hole, than by all the rest of his studies put together.

As the doctor increased in wealth, he began to extend his possessions, and to look forward, like other great men, to the time when he should retire to the repose of a country seat. For this purpose he had purchased a farm, or, as the Dutch settlers called it, a *bowerie*, a few miles from town. It had been the residence of a wealthy family that had returned some

time since to Holland. A large mansion-house stood in the centre of it, very much out of repair, and which, in consequence of certain reports, had received the appellation of the Haunted House. Either from these reports, or from its actual dreariness, the doctor had found it impossible to get a tenant; and, that the place might not fall to ruin before he could reside in it himself, he had placed a country boor, with his family, in one wing, with the privilege of cultivating the farm on shares.

The doctor now felt all the dignity of a landholder rising within him. He had a little of the German pride of territory in his composition, and almost looked upon himself as owner of a principality. He began to complain of the fatigue of business; and was fond of riding out "to look at his estate." His little expeditions to his lands were attended with a bustle and parade that created a sensation throughout the neighbourhood. His wall-eyed horse stood stamping, and whisking off the flies, for a full hour before the house. Then the doctor's saddle-bags would be brought out and adjusted; then, after a little while, his cloak would be rolled up and strapped to the saddle; then his umbrella would be buckled to the cloak; while, in the meantime, a group of ragged boys, that observant class of beings, would gather before the door. At length the doctor would issue forth, in a pair of jack-boots that reached above his knees, and a cocked hat flapped down in front. As he was a short, fat man, he took some time to mount into the saddle; and when there, he took some time to have the saddle and stirrups properly adjusted, enjoying the wonder and admiration of the urchin crowd. Even after he had set off, he would pause in the middle of the street, or trot back two or three times to give some parting orders; which were answered by the housekeeper from the door, or Dolph from the study, or the black cook from the cellar, or the chambermaid from the garret window; and there were generally some last words bawled after him, just as he was turning the corner.

The whole neighbourhood would be aroused by this pomp and circumstance. The cobbler would leave his last; the barber would thrust out his frizzed head, with a comb sticking in it; a knot would collect at the grocer's door, and the word would be buzzed from one end of the street to the other, "The doctor's riding out to his country seat!"

These were golden moments for Dolph. No sooner was the doctor out of sight, than pestle and mortar were abandoned; the laboratory was left to take care of itself, and the student was off on some mad-cap frolic.

Indeed, it must be confessed, the youngster, as he grew up, seemed in a fair way to fulfil the prediction of the old, claret-coloured gentleman. He was the ringleader of all holiday sports and midnight gambols; ready for all kinds of mischievous pranks and hair-brained adventures.

There is nothing so troublesome as a hero on a small scale, or, rather, a hero in a small town. Dolph soon became the abhorrence of all drowsy, housekeeping old citizens, who hated noise, and had no relish for waggyery. The good dames, too, considered him as little better than a reprobate, gathered their daughters under their wings whenever he approached, and pointed him out as a warning to their sons. No one seemed to hold him in much regard, except the wild striplings of the place, who were captivated by his open-hearted, daring manners, and the negroes, who always look upon every idle, do-nothing youngster, as a kind of gentleman. Even the good Peter de Groodt, who had considered himself a kind of patron of the lad, began to despair of him, and would shake his head dubiously, as he listened to a long complaint from the housekeeper, and sipped a glass of her raspberry-brandy.

Still his mother was not to be wearied out of her affection by all the waywardness of her boy, nor disheartened by the stories of his misdeeds, with which her good friends were continually regaling her. She had, it is true, very little of the pleasure which rich people enjoy, in always hearing their children praised; but she considered all this ill-will as a kind of persecution which he suffered, and she liked him the better on that account. She saw him growing up a fine, tall, good-looking youngster, and she looked at him with the secret joy of a mother's heart. It was her great desire that Dolph should appear like a gentleman, and all the money she could save went towards helping out his pocket and his wardrobe. She would look out at the window after him, as he sallied forth in his best array, and her heart would yearn with delight; and once, when Peter de Groodt, struck with the youngster's gallant appearance on a bright Sunday morning, observed, "Well, after all, Dolph does grow a comely fellow!" the tear of pride started into the mother's eye. "Ah, neighbour! neighbour!" exclaimed she, "they may say what they please; poor Dolph will yet hold up his head with the best of them!"

Dolph Heyliger had now nearly attained his one-and-twentieth year, and the term of his medical studies was just expiring, yet it must be confessed, that he knew little more

of the profession than when he first entered the doctor's doors. This, however, could not be from any want of quickness of parts, for he showed amazing aptness in mastering other branches of knowledge, which he could only have studied at intervals. He was, for instance, a sure marksman, and won all the geese and turkeys at Christmas holidays. He was a bold rider; he was famous for leaping and wrestling; he played tolerably on the fiddle; could swim like a fish; and was the best hand in the whole place at fives or nine-pins.

All these accomplishments, however, procured him no favour in the eyes of the doctor, who grew more and more crabbed and intolerant the nearer the term of apprenticeship approached. Frau Hsy, too, was for ever finding some occasion to raise a windy tempest about his ears, and seldom encountered him about the house without a clatter of the tongue; so that at length the jingling of her keys as she approached, was to Dolph like the ringing of the prompter's bell, that gives notice of a theatrical thunder-storm. Nothing but the infinite good humour of the heedless youngster enabled him to bear all this domestic tyranny without open rebellion. It was evident that the doctor and his house-keeper were preparing to beat the poor youth out of the nest, the moment his term should have expired; a short-hand mode which the doctor had of providing for useless disciples.

Indeed, the little man had been rendered more than usually irritable lately, in consequence of various cares and vexations which his country estate had brought upon him. The doctor had been repeatedly annoyed by the rumours and tales which prevailed concerning the old mansion, and found it difficult to prevail even upon the countryman and his family to remain there rent free. Every time he rode out to the farm he was teased by some fresh complaint of strange noises and fearful sights, with which the tenants were disturbed at night; and the doctor would come home fretting and fuming, and vent his spleen upon the whole household. It was, indeed, a sore grievance, that affected him both in pride and purse. He was threatened with an absolute loss of the profits of his property; and then, what a blow to his territorial consequence, to be the landlord of a haunted house!

It was observed, however, that with all his vexation, the doctor never proposed to sleep in the house himself; nay, he could never be prevailed upon to remain on the premises after dark, but made the best of his way for town as soon as the

bats began to flit about in the twilight. The fact was, the doctor had a secret belief in ghosts, having passed the early part of his life in a country where they particularly abound: and indeed the story went, that when a boy, he had once seen the devil upon the Hartz mountains in Germany.

At length the doctor's vexations on this head were brought to a crisis. One morning as he sat dozing over a volume in his study, he was suddenly startled from his slumbers by the bustling in of the housekeeper.

"Here's a fine to do!" cried she, as she entered the room. "Here's Claus Hopper come in, bag and baggage, from the farm, and swears he'll have nothing more to do with it. The whole family have been frightened out of their wits; for there's such racketting and rummaging about the old house, that they can't sleep quiet in their beds!"

"Donner und Blitzen!" cried the doctor, impatiently; "will they never have done chattering about that house? What a pack of fools, to let a few rats and mice frighten them out of good quarters!"

"Nay, nay," said the housekeeper, wagging her head knowingly, and piqued at having a good ghost story doubted, "there's more in it than rats and mice. All the neighbourhood talks about the house; and then such sights have been seen in it! Peter de Groodt tells me, that the family that sold you the house and went to Holland, dropped several strange hints about it, and said, 'they wished you joy of your bargain;' and you know yourself there's no getting any family to live in it."

"Peter de Groodt's a ninny—an old woman," said the doctor, peevishly; "I'll warrant he's been filling these people's heads full of stories. It's just like his nonsense about the ghost that haunted the church belfry, as an excuse for not ringing the bell that cold night when Hermanus Brinkherhoff's house was on fire. Send Claus to me."

Claus Hopper now made his appearance; a simple country lout, full of awe at finding himself in the very study of Dr. Knipperhausen, and too much embarrassed to enter in much detail of the matters that had caused his alarm. He stood twirling his hat in one hand, resting sometimes on one leg, sometimes on the other, looking occasionally at the doctor, and now and then stealing a fearful glance at the death's head that seemed ogling him from the top of the clothes-press

The doctor tried every means to persuade him to return to the farm, but all in vain; he maintained a dogged determination on the subject; and at the close of every argument or solicitation would make the same brief inflexible reply, "Ich kan nicht, mynheer." The doctor was a "little pot, and soon hot;" his patience was exhausted by these continual vexations about his estate. The stubborn refusal of Claus Hopper seemed to him like flat rebellion; his temper suddenly boiled over, and Claus was glad to make a rapid retreat to escape scalding.

When the bumpkin got to the housekeeper's room, he found Peter de Groodt, and several other true believers, ready to receive him. Here he indemnified himself for the restraint he had suffered in the study, and opened a budget of stories about the haunted house that astonished all his hearers. The housekeeper believed them all, if it was only to spite the doctor for having received her intelligence so uncourtously. Peter de Groodt matched them with many a wonderful legend of the times of the Dutch dynasty, and of the Devil's Stepping-stones; and of the pirate that was hanged at Gibbet Island, and continued to swing there at night long after the gallows was taken down; and of the ghost of the unfortunate Governor Leisler, who was hanged for treason, which haunted the old fort and the government-house. The gossiping knot dispersed, each charged with direful intelligence. The sexton disburdened himself at a vestry meeting that was held that very day, and the black cook forsook her kitchen, and spent half of the day at the street pump, that gossiping place of servants, dealing forth the news to all that came for water. In a little time the whole town was in a buzz with tales about the haunted house. Some said that Claus Hopper had seen the devil, while others hinted that the house was haunted by the ghosts of some of the patients whom the doctor had physicked out of the world, and that was the reason why he he did not venture to live in it himself.

All this put the little doctor in a terrible fume. He threatened vengeance on any one who should affect the value of his property by exciting popular prejudices. He complained loudly of thus being in a manner dispossessed of his territories by mere bugbears; but he secretly determined to have the house exorcised by the dominie. Great was his relief, therefore, when, in the midst of his perplexities, Dolph stepped forward and undertook to garrison the haunted house.

The youngster had been listening to all the stories of Claus Hopper and Peter de Groodt: he was fond of adventure, he loved the marvellous, and his imagination had become quite excited by these tales of wonder. Besides, he had led such an uncomfortable life at the doctor's, being subjected to the intolerable thralldom of early hours, that he was delighted at the prospect of having a house to himself, even though it should be a haunted one. His offer was eagerly accepted, and it was determined that he should mount guard that very night. His only stipulation was, that the enterprise should be kept secret from his mother; for he knew the poor soul would not sleep a wink if she knew that her son was waging war with the powers of darkness.

When night came on, he set out on his perilous expedition. The old black cook, his only friend in the household, had provided him with a little mess for supper and a rushlight; and she tied round his neck an amulet, given her by an African conjuror, as a charm against evil spirits. Dolph was escorted on his way by the doctor and Peter de Groodt, who had agreed to accompany him to the house and to see him safe lodged. The night was overcast, and it was very dark when they arrived at the grounds which surrounded the mansion. The sexton led the way with a lantern. As they walked along the avenue of acacias, the fitful light, catching from bush to bush, and tree to tree, often startled the doughty Peter, and made him fall back upon his followers; and the doctor grappled still closer hold of Dolph's arm, observing that the ground was very slippery and uneven. At one time they were nearly put to total rout by a bat, which came flitting about the lantern; and the notes of the insects from the trees, and the frogs from a neighbouring pond, formed a most drowsy and doleful concert.

The front door of the mansion opened with a grating sound, that made the doctor turn pale. They entered a tolerably large hall, such as is common in American country houses, and which serves for a sitting-room in warm weather. From hence they went up a wide staircase, that groaned and creaked as they trod, every step making its particular note, like the key of a harpsichord. This led to another hall on the second story, from whence they entered the room where Dolph was to sleep. It was large, and scantily furnished; the shutters were closed; but as they were much broken, there was no want of a circulation of air. It appeared to

have been that sacred chamber, known among Dutch housewives by the name of "the best bed-room;" which is the best furnished room in the house, but in which scarce any body is ever permitted to sleep. Its splendour, however, was all at an end. There were a few broken articles of furniture about the room, and in the centre stood a deal table and a large arm-chair, both of which had the look of being coeval with the mansion. The fire-place was wide, and had been faced with Dutch tiles, representing Scripture stories; but some of them had fallen out of their places, and lay shattered about the hearth. The sexton had lit the rushlight; and the doctor, looking fearfully about the room, was just exhorting Dolph to be of good cheer, and to pluck up a stout heart, when a noise in the chimney, like voices and struggling, struck a sudden panic into the sexton. He took to his heels with the lantern; the doctor followed hard after him; the stairs groaned and creaked as they hurried down, increasing their agitation and speed by its noises. The front door slammed after them; and Dolph heard them scrambling down the avenue, till the sound of their feet was lost in the distance. That he did not join in this precipitate retreat might have been owing to his possessing a little more courage than his companions, or perhaps that he had caught a glimpse of the cause of their dismay, in a nest of chimney swallows, that came tumbling down into the fire-place.

Being now left to himself, he secured the front door by a strong bolt and bar; and having seen that the other entrances were fastened, he returned to his desolate chamber. Having made his supper from the basket which the good old cook had provided, he locked the chamber door, and retired to rest on a mattress in one corner. The night was calm and still; and nothing broke upon the profound quiet, but the lonely chirping of a cricket from the chimney of a distant chamber. The rushlight, which stood in the centre of the deal table, shed a feeble yellow ray, dimly illumining the chamber, and making uncouth shapes and shadows on the walls, from the clothes which Dolph had thrown over a chair.

With all his boldness of heart there was something subduing in this desolate scene; and he felt his spirits flag within him, as he lay on his hard bed and gazed about the room. He was turning over in his mind his idle habits, his doubtful prospects, and now and then heaving a heavy sigh, as he thought on his poor old mother; for there is nothing

like the silence and loneliness of night to bring dark shadows over the brightest mind. By and by he thought he heard a sound as if some one was walking below stairs. He listened, and distinctly heard a step on the great staircase. It approached solemnly and slowly, tramp, tramp, tramp! It was evidently the tread of some heavy personage; and yet how could he have got into the house without making a noise? He had examined all the fastenings, and was certain that every entrance was secure. Still the steps advanced, tramp, tramp, tramp! It was evident that the person approaching could not be a robber, the step was too loud and deliberate; a robber would either be stealthy or precipitate. And now the footsteps had ascended the staircase; they were slowly advancing along the passage, resounding through the silent and empty apartments. The very cricket had ceased its melancholy note, and nothing interrupted their awful distinctness. The door, which had been locked on the inside, slowly swung open, as if self-moved. The footsteps entered the room, but no one was to be seen. They passed slowly and audibly across it, tramp, tramp, tramp! but whatever made the sound was invisible. Dolph rubbed his eyes, and stared about him; he could see to every part of the dimly-lighted chamber; all was vacant; yet still he heard those mysterious footsteps, solemnly walking about the chamber. They ceased, and all was dead silence. There was something more appalling in this invisible visitation, than there would have been in anything that addressed itself to the eyesight. It was awfully vague and indefinite. He felt his heart beat against his ribs; a cold sweat broke out upon his forehead; he lay for some time in a state of violent agitation; nothing, however, occurred to increase his alarm. His light gradually burnt down into the socket, and he fell asleep. When he awoke it was broad daylight; the sun was peering through the cracks of the window shutters, and the birds were merrily singing about the house. The bright, cheery day soon put to flight all the terrors of the preceding night. Dolph laughed, or rather tried to laugh, at all that had passed, and endeavoured to persuade himself that it was a mere freak of the imagination, conjured up by the stories he had heard; but he was a little puzzled to find the door of his room locked on the inside, notwithstanding that he had positively seen it swing open as the footsteps had entered. He returned to town in a state of considerable perplexity; but he determined to say

nothing on the subject, until his doubts were either confirmed or removed by another night's watching. His silence was a grievous disappointment to the gossips who had gathered at the doctor's mansion. They had prepared their minds to hear direful tales; and they were almost in a rage at being assured that he had nothing to relate.

The next night, then, Dolph repeated his vigil. He now entered the house with some trepidation. He was particular in examining the fastenings of all the doors, and securing them well. He locked the door of his chamber and placed a chair against it; then, having dispatched his supper, he threw himself on his mattress and endeavoured to sleep. It was all in vain; a thousand crowding fancies kept him waking. The time slowly dragged on, as if minutes were spinning themselves out into hours. As the night advanced, he grew more and more nervous; and he almost started from his couch when he heard the mysterious footstep again on the staircase. Up it came, as before, solemnly and slowly, tramp, tramp, tramp! It approached along the passage; the door again swung open, as if there had been neither lock nor impediment, and a strange-looking figure stalked into the room. It was an elderly man, large and robust, clothed in the old Flemish fashion. He had on a kind of short cloak, with a garment under it, belted round the waist; trunk-hose, with great bunches or bows at the knees; and a pair of russet boots, very large at top, and standing widely from his legs. His hat was broad and slouched, with a feather trailing over one side. His iron-grey hair hung in thick masses on his neck, and he had a short grizzled beard. He walked slowly round the room, as if examining that all was safe; then hanging his hat on a peg beside the door, he sat down in the elbow-chair, and, leaning his elbow on the table, he fixed his eyes on Dolph with an unmoving and deadening stare.

Dolph was not naturally a coward; but he had been brought up in an implicit belief in ghosts and goblins. A thousand stories came swarming to his mind that he had heard about this building; and as he looked at this strange personage, with his uncouth garb, his pale visage, his grizzly beard, and his fixed, staring, fish-like eye, his teeth began to chatter, his hair to rise on his head, and a cold sweat to break out all over his body. How long he remained in this situation he could not tell, for he was like one fascinated. He could not take his gaze off from the spectre; but lay staring at him

with his whole intellect absorbed in the contemplation. The old man remained seated behind the table, without stirring, or turning an eye, always keeping a dead, steady glare upon Dolph. At length the household cock, from a neighbouring farm, clapped his wings, and gave a loud, cheerful crow that rung over the fields. At the sound the old man slowly rose, and took down his hat from the peg; the door opened and closed after him; he was heard to go slowly down the staircase, tramp, tramp, tramp!—and when he had got to the bottom, all was again silent. Dolph lay and listened earnestly; counted every footfall; listened, and listened if the steps should return, until, exhausted with watching and agitation, he fell into a troubled sleep.

Daylight again brought fresh courage and assurance. He would fain have considered all that had passed as a mere dream; yet there stood the chair in which the unknown had seated himself; there was the table on which he had leaned; there was the peg on which he had hung his hat; and there was the door, locked precisely as he himself had locked it, with the chair placed against it. He hastened down stairs and examined the doors and windows; all were exactly in the same state in which he had left them, and there was no apparent way by which any being could have entered and left the house, without leaving some trace behind. "Pooh!" said Dolph to himself, "it was all a dream:"—but it would not do; the more he endeavoured to shake the scene off from his mind, the more it haunted him.

Though he persisted in a strict silence as to all that he had seen and heard, yet his looks betrayed the uncomfortable night that he had passed. It was evident that there was something wonderful hidden under this mysterious reserve. The doctor took him into the study, locked the door, and sought to have a full and confidential communication; but he could get nothing out of him. Frau Ilsy took him aside into the pantry, but to as little purpose; and Peter de Groodt held him by the button for a full hour, in the churchyard—the very place to get at the bottom of a ghost story—but came off not a whit wiser than the rest. It is always the case, however, that one truth concealed makes a dozen current lies. It is like a guinea locked up in a bank, that has a dozen paper representatives. Before the day was over, the neighbourhood was full of reports. Some said that Dolph Heyliger watched in the haunted house, with pistols loaded with silver bullets;

others, that he had a long talk with a spectre without a head ; others, that Doctor Knipperhausen and the sexton had been hunted down the bowery-lane, and quite into town, by a legion of ghosts of their customers. Some shook their heads, and thought it a shame that the doctor should put Dolph to pass the night alone in that dismal house, where he might be spirited away, no one knew whither ; while others observed, with a shrug, that if the devil did carry off the youngster, it would but be taking his own.

These rumours at length reached the ears of the good Dame Heyliger, and, as may be supposed, threw her into a terrible alarm. For her son to have opposed himself to danger from living foes, would have been nothing so dreadful in her eyes, as to dare alone the terrors of the haunted house. She hastened to the doctor's, and passed a great part of the day in attempting to dissuade Dolph from repeating his vigil ; she told him a score of tales, which her gossiping friends had just related to her, of persons who had been carried off, when watching alone, in old ruinous houses. It was all to no effect. Dolph's pride, as well as curiosity, was piqued. He endeavoured to calm the apprehensions of his mother, and to assure her that there was no truth in all the rumours she had heard. She looked at him dubiously, and shook her head ; but finding his determination was not to be shaken, she brought him a little thick Dutch Bible, with brass clasps, to take with him, as a sword wherewith to fight the powers of darkness ; and, lest that might not be sufficient, the housekeeper gave him the Heidelberg catechism by way of dagger.

The next night, therefore, Dolph took up his quarters for the third time in the old mansion. Whether dream or not, the same thing was repeated. Towards midnight, when every thing was still, the same sound echoed through the empty halls—tramp, tramp, tramp ! The stairs were again ascended ; the door again swung open ; the old man entered ; walked round the room ; hung up his hat, and seated himself by the table. The same fear and trembling came over poor Dolph, though not in so violent a degree. He lay in the same way, motionless and fascinated, staring at the figure, which regarded him as before, with a dead, fixed, chilling gaze. In this way they remained for a long time, till, by degrees, Dolph's courage began gradually to revive. Whether alive or dead, this being had certainly some object in his visitation ; and he recollected to have heard it said, that spirits have no

power to speak until they are spoken to. Summoning up resolution, therefore, and making two or three attempts, before he could get his parched tongue in motion, he addressed the unknown in the most solemn form of adjuration that he could recollect, and demanded to know what was the motive of his visit.

No sooner had he finished, than the old man rose, took down his hat, the door opened, and he went out, looking back upon Dolph just as he crossed the threshold, as if expecting him to follow. The youngster did not hesitate an instant. He took the candle in his hand, and the Bible under his arm, and obeyed the tacit invitation. The candle emitted a feeble, uncertain ray; but still he could see the figure before him, slowly descending the stairs. He followed, trembling. When it had reached the bottom of the stairs, it turned through the hall towards the back door of the mansion. Dolph held the light over the balustrades; but, in his eagerness to catch a sight of the unknown, he flared his feeble taper so suddenly, that it went out. Still there was sufficient light from the pale moonbeams, that fell through a narrow window, to give him an indistinct view of the figure near the door. He followed, therefore, down stairs, and turned towards the place; but when he had got there, the unknown had disappeared. The door remained fast barred and bolted; there was no other mode of exit; yet the being, whatever he might be, was gone. He unfastened the door, and looked out into the fields. It was a hazy, moonlight night, so that the eye could distinguish objects at some distance. He thought he saw the unknown in a footpath that led from the door. He was not mistaken; but how had he got out of the house? He did not pause to think, but followed on. The old man proceeded at a measured pace, without looking about him, his footsteps sounding on the hard ground. He passed through the orchard of apple-trees that stood near the house, always keeping the footpath. It led to a well, situated in a little hollow, which had supplied the farm with water. Just at this well Dolph lost sight of him. He rubbed his eyes and looked again, but nothing was to be seen of the unknown. He reached the well, but nobody was there. All the surrounding ground was open and clear; there was no bush nor hiding-place. He looked down the well and saw, at a great depth, the reflection of the sky in the still water. After remaining here for some time, without seeing or hearing anything more of his mysterious conductor, he returned to the house, full of awe and wonder. He bolted

the door, groped his way back to bed, and it was long before he could compose himself to sleep.

His dreams were strange and troubled. He thought he was following the old man along the side of a great river, until they came to a vessel that was on the point of sailing; and that his conductor led him on board and vanished. He remembered the commander of the vessel, a short, swarthy man, with crisped black hair, blind of one eye, and lame of one leg; but the rest of his dream was very confused. Sometimes he was sailing; sometimes on shore; now amidst storms and tempests, and now wandering quietly in unknown streets. The figure of the old man was strangely mingled up with the incidents of the dream; and the whole distinctly wound up by his finding himself on board the vessel again, returning home with a great bag of money!

When he woke, the gray, cool light of dawn was streaking the horizon, and the cocks passing the *revell* from farm to farm throughout the country. He rose more harassed and perplexed than ever. He was singularly confounded by all that he had seen and dreamt, and began to doubt whether his mind was not affected, and whether all that was passing in his thoughts might not be mere feverish fantasy. In his present state of mind, he did not feel disposed to return immediately to the doctor's, and undergo the cross-questioning of the household. He made a scanty breakfast, therefore, on the remains of the last night's provisions, and then wandered out into the fields to meditate on all that had befallen him. Lost in thought, he rambled about, gradually approaching the town, until the morning was far advanced, when he was roused by a hurry and bustle around him. He found himself near the water's edge, in a throng of people, hurrying to a pier, where there was a vessel ready to make sail. He was unconsciously carried along by the impulse of the crowd, and found that it was a sloop, on the point of sailing up the Hudson to Albany. There was much leave-taking, and kissing of old women and children, and great activity in carrying on board baskets of bread and cakes, and provisions of all kinds, notwithstanding the mighty joints of meat that dangled over the stern: for a voyage to Albany was an expedition of great moment in those days. The commander of the sloop was hurrying about and giving a world of orders, which were not very strictly attended to: one man being busy in lighting his pipe, and another in sharpening his snicker-snee.

The appearance of the commander suddenly caught Dolph's attention. He was short and swarthy, with crisped black hair; blind of one eye, and lame of one leg—the very commander that he had seen in his dream! Surprised and aroused, he considered the scene more attentively, and recalled still further traces of his dream: the appearance of the vessel, of the river, and of a variety of other objects, accorded with the imperfect images vaguely rising to recollection.

As he stood musing on these circumstances, the captain suddenly called to him in Dutch, "Step on board, young man, or you'll be left behind!" He was startled by the summons; he saw that the sloop was cast loose, and was actually moving from the pier; it seemed as if he was actuated by some irresistible impulse; he sprang upon the deck, and the next moment the sloop was hurried off by the wind and tide. Dolph's thoughts and feelings were all in tumult and confusion. He had been strongly worked upon by the events that had recently befallen him, and could not but think that there was some connexion between his present situation and his last night's dream. He felt as if he were under supernatural influence; and he tried to assure himself with an old and favourite maxim of his, that, "one way or other, all would turn out for the best." For a moment, the indignation of the doctor at his departure, without leave, passed across his mind, but that was matter of little moment; then he thought of the distress of his mother at his strange disappearance, and the idea gave him a sudden pang; he would have entreated to be put on shore; but he knew with such wind and tide the entreaty would have been in vain. Then the inspiring love of novelty and adventure came rushing in full tide through his bosom; he felt himself launched strangely and suddenly on the world, and under full way to explore the regions of wonder that lay up this mighty river, and beyond those blue mountains that had bounded his horizon since childhood. While he was lost in this whirl of thought, the sails strained to the breeze; the shores seemed to hurry away behind him; and, before he perfectly recovered his self-possession, the sloop was ploughing her way past Spiking-devil and Yonkers, and the tallest chimney of the Manhattoes had faded from his sight.

I have said that a voyage up the Hudson in those days was an undertaking of some moment; indeed, it was as much thought of as a voyage to Europe is at present. The sloops were often many days on the way: the cautious navigators

taking in sail when it blew fresh, and coming to anchor at night; and stopping to send the boat ashore for milk for tea; without which it was impossible for the worthy old lady passengers to subsist. And then there were the much-talked-of perils of the Tappaanzee, and the highlands. In short, a prudent Dutch burgher would talk of such a voyage for months, and even years, beforehand; and never undertook it without putting his affairs in order, making his will, and having prayers said for him in the Low Dutch churches.

In the course of such a voyage, therefore, Dolph was satisfied he would have time enough to reflect, and to make up his mind as to what he should do when he arrived at Albany. The captain, with his blind eye, and lame leg, would, it is true, bring his strange dream to mind, and perplex him sadly for a few moments; but of late his life had been made up so much of dreams and realities, his nights and days had been so jumbled together, that he seemed to be moving continually in a delusion. There is always, however, a kind of vagabond consolation in a man's having nothing in this world to lose; with this Dolph comforted his heart, and determined to make the most of the present enjoyment.

In the second day of the voyage they came to the highlands. It was the latter part of a calm, sultry day, that they floated gently with the tide between these stern mountains. There was that perfect quiet which prevails over nature in the languor of summer heat; the turning of a plank, or the accidental falling of an oar on deck, was echoed from the mountain-side, and reverberated along the shores; and if by chance the captain gave a shout of command, there were airy tongues that mocked it from every cliff.

Dolph gazed about him in mute delight and wonder at these scenes of nature's magnificence. To the left the Dunderberg reared its woody precipices, height over height, forest over forest, away into the deep summer sky. To the right strutted forth the bold promontory of Anthony's Nose, with a solitary eagle wheeling about it; while beyond, mountain succeeded to mountain, until they seemed to lock their arms together, and confine this mighty river in their embraces. There was a feeling of quiet luxury in gazing at the broad, green bosoms here and there scooped out among the precipices; or at woodlands high in air, nodding over the edge of some beetling bluff, and their foliage all transparent in the yellow sunshine.

In the midst of his admiration, Dolph remarked a pile of bright, snowy clouds peering above the western heights. It was succeeded by another and another, each seemingly pushing onwards its predecessor, and towering, with dazzling brilliancy, in the deep blue atmosphere; and now muttering peals of thunder were faintly heard rolling behind the mountains. The river, hitherto still and glassy, reflecting pictures of the sky and land, now showed a dark ripple at a distance, as the breeze came creeping up it. The fish-hawks wheeled and screamed, and sought their nests on the high, dry trees; the crows flew clamorously to the crevices of the rocks, and all nature seemed conscious of the approaching thunder-gust.

The clouds now rolled in volumes over the mountain tops; their summits still bright and snowy, but the lower parts of an inky blackness. The rain began to patter down in broad and scattered drops; the wind freshened, and curled up the waves: at length it seemed as if the bellying clouds were torn open by the mountain tops, and complete torrents of rain came rattling down. The lightning leaped from cloud to cloud, and streamed quivering against the rocks, splitting and rending the stoutest forest trees. The thunder burst in tremendous explosions; the peals were echoed from mountain to mountain; they crashed upon Dunderberg, and rolled up the long defile of the highlands, each headland making a new echo, until old Bull Hill seemed to bellow back the storm.

For a time the scudding rack and mist, and the sheeted rain, almost hid the landscape from the sight. There was a fearful gloom, illumined still more fearfully by the streams of lightning which glittered among the rain-drops. Never had Dolph beheld such an absolute warring of the elements; it seemed as if the storm was tearing and rending its way through this mountain defile, and had brought all the artillery of heaven into action.

The vessel was hurried on by the increasing wind, until she came to where the river makes a sudden bend, the only one in the whole course of its majestic career.* Just as they turned the point, a violent flaw of wind came sweeping down a mountain-gully, bending the forest before it, and, in a moment, lashing up the river into white froth and foam. The captain saw the danger, and cried out to lower the sail. Before the order could be obeyed, the flaw struck the sloop, and threw her on her beam-ends. Every thing now was

* This must have been the bend at West Point.

fright and confusion: the flapping of the sails, the whistling and rushing of the wind, the bawling of the captain and crew, the shrieking of the passengers, all mingled with the rolling and bellowing of the thunder. In the midst of the uproar the sloop righted; at the same time the mainsail shifted, the boom came sweeping the quarter-deck, and Dolph, who was gazing unguardedly at the clouds, found himself, in a moment, floundering in the river.

For once in his life one of his idle accomplishments was of use to him. The many truant hours which he had devoted to sporting in the Hudson had made him an expert swimmer; yet, with all his strength and skill, he found great difficulty in reaching the shore. His disappearance from the deck had not been noticed by the crew, who were all occupied by their own danger. The sloop was driven along with inconceivable rapidity. She had hard work to weather a long promontory on the eastern shore, round which the river turned, and which completely shut her from Dolph's view.

It was on a point of the western shore that he landed, and, scrambling up the rocks, he threw himself, faint and exhausted, at the foot of a tree. By degrees the thunder gust passed over. The clouds rolled away to the east, where they lay piled in feathery masses, tinted with the last rosy rays of the sun. The distant play of the lightning might be still seen about their dark bases, and now and then might be heard the faint muttering of the thunder. Dolph rose, and sought about to see if any path led from the shore, but all was savage and trackless. The rocks were piled upon each other; great trunks of trees lay shattered about, as they had been blown down by the strong winds which draw through these mountains, or had fallen through age. The rocks, too, were overhung with wild vines and briars, which completely matted themselves together, and opposed a barrier to all ingress; every movement that he made shook down a shower from the dripping foliage. He attempted to scale one of these almost perpendicular heights; but, though strong and agile, he found it an Herculean undertaking. Often he was supported merely by crumbling projections of the rock, and sometimes he clung to roots and branches of trees, and hung almost suspended in the air. The wood-pigeon came cleaving his whistling flight by him, and the eagle screamed from the brow of the impending cliff. As he was thus clambering, he was on the point of seizing hold of a shrub to aid his ascent,

when something rustled among the leaves, and he saw a snake quivering along like lightning, almost from under his hand. It coiled itself up immediately, in an attitude of defiance, with flattened head, distended jaws, and quickly-vibrating tongue, that played like a little flame about its mouth. Dolph's heart turned faint within him, and he had well-nigh let go his hold, and tumbled down the precipice. The serpent stood on the defensive but for an instant; it was an instinctive movement of defence; and, finding there was no attack, it glided away into a cleft of the rock. Dolph's eye followed it with fearful intensity; and he saw at a glance that he was in the vicinity of a nest of adders, that lay knotted, and writhing, and hissing in the chasm. He hastened with all speed to escape from so frightful a neighbourhood. His imagination was full of this new horror; he saw an adder in every curling vine, and heard the tail of a rattlesnake in every dry leaf that rustled.

At length he succeeded in scrambling to the summit of a precipice; but it was covered by a dense forest. Wherever he could gain a look-out between the trees, he saw that the coast rose in heights and cliffs, one rising beyond another, until huge mountains overtopped the whole.

There was no sign of cultivation, nor any smoke curling amongst the trees to indicate a human residence. Everything was wild and solitary. As he was standing on the edge of a precipice that overlooked a deep ravine fringed with trees, his feet detached a great fragment of rock; it fell, crashing its way through the tree tops, down into the chasm. A loud whoop, or rather yell, issued from the bottom of the glen: the moment after there was the report of a gun; and a ball came whistling over his head, cutting the twigs and leaves, and burying itself deep in the bark of a chesnut-tree.

Dolph did not wait for a second shot, but made a precipitate retreat; fearing every moment to hear the enemy in pursuit. He succeeded, however, in returning unmolested to the shore, and determined to penetrate no farther into a country so beset with savage perils.

He sat himself down, dripping, disconsolately, on a wet stone. What was to be done? where was he to shelter himself? The hour of repose was approaching; the birds were seeking their nests, the bat began to flit about in the twilight, and the night-hawk, soaring high in heaven, seemed to be calling out the stars. Night gradually closed in, and wrapped

everything in gloom: and though it was the latter part of summer, yet the breeze stealing along the river, and among these dripping forests, was chilly and penetrating, especially to a half-drowned man.

As he sat drooping and despondent in this comfortless condition, he perceived a light gleaming through the trees near the shore, where the winding of the river made a deep bay. It cheered him with the hopes that here might be some human habitation where he might get something to appease the clamorous cravings of his stomach, and what was equally necessary in his shipwrecked condition, a comfortable shelter for the night. It was with extreme difficulty that he made his way towards the light, along ledges of rocks, down which he was in danger of sliding into the river, and over great trunks of fallen trees; some of which had been blown down in the late storm, and lay so thickly together, that he had to struggle through their branches. At length he came to the brow of a rock that overhung a small dell, from whence the light proceeded. It was from a fire at the foot of a great tree that stood in the midst of a grassy interval or plat among the rocks. The fire cast up a red glare among the gray crags, and impending trees; leaving chasms of deep gloom, that resembled entrances to caverns. A small brook rippled close by, betrayed by the quivering reflection of the flame. There were two figures moving about the fire, and others squatted before it. As they were between him and the light, they were in complete shadow: but one of them happening to move round to the opposite side, Dolph was startled at perceiving, by the full glare falling on painted features, and glittering on silver ornaments, that he was an Indian. He now looked more narrowly, and saw guns leaning against a tree, and a dead body lying on the ground.

Dolph began to doubt whether he was not in a worse condition than before; here was the very foe that had fired at him from the glen. He endeavoured to retreat quietly, not caring to entrust himself to these half-human beings in so savage and lonely a place. It was too late: the Indian, with that eagle-quickness of eye so remarkable in his race, perceived something stirring among the bushes on the rock: he seized one of the guns that leaned against the tree; one moment more, and Dolph might have had his passion for adventure cured by a bullet. He hallooed loudly, with the Indian salutation of friendship; the whole party sprung upon their feet: the salu-

tation was returned, and the straggler was invited to join them at the fire.

On approaching, he found, to his consolation, that the party was composed of white men, as well as Indians. One, who was evidently the principal personage, or commander, was seated on a trunk of a tree before the fire. He was a large, stout man, somewhat advanced in life, but hale and hearty. His face was bronzed almost to the colour of an Indian's; he had strong but rather jovial features, an aquiline nose, and a mouth shaped like a mastiff's. His face was half thrown in shade by a broad hat, with a buck's tail in it. His gray hair hung short in his neck. He wore a hunting frock, with Indian leggings, and mocassins, and a tomahawk in the broad wampum belt round his waist. As Dolph caught a distinct view of his person and features, he was struck with something that reminded him of the old man of the Haunted House. The man before him, however, was different in his dress and age; he was more cheery, too, in his aspect, and it was hard to define where the vague resemblance lay; but a resemblance there certainly was. Dolph felt some degree of awe in approaching him; but was assured by the frank, hearty welcome with which he was received. As he cast his eyes about, too, he was still further encouraged, by perceiving that the dead body, which had caused him some alarm, was that of a deer; and his satisfaction was complete in discerning, by the savoury steams which issued from a kettle, suspended by a hooked stick over the fire, that there was a part cooking for the evening's repast.

He now found that he had fallen in with a rambling hunting party; such as often took place in those days among the settlers along the river. The hunter is always hospitable; and nothing makes men more social and unceremonious than meeting in the wilderness. The commander of the party poured him out a dram of cheering liquor, which he gave him with a merry leer, to warm his heart; and ordered one of his followers to fetch some garments from a pinnace, which was moored in a cove close by: while those in which our hero was dripping might be dried before the fire.

Dolph found, as he had suspected, that the shot from the glen, which had come so near giving him his quietus when on the precipice, was from the party before him. He had nearly crushed one of them by the fragment of rock which he had detached; and the jovial old hunter, in the broad hat and buck's tail, had fired at the place where he saw the bushes

move, supposing it to be some wild animal. He laughed heartily at the blunder, it being what is considered an exceeding good joke among hunters; "but, faith, my lad," said he, "if I had but caught a glimpse of you to take sight at, you would have followed the rock. Antony Vander Heyden is seldom known to miss his aim." These last words were at once a clue to Dolph's curiosity; and a few questions let him completely into the character of the man before him, and of his band of woodland rangers. The commander in the broad hat and hunting frock was no less a personage than the Heer Antony Vander Heyden of Albany, of whom Dolph had many a time heard. He was, in fact, the hero of many a story, being a man of singular humours and whimsical habits, that were matters of wonder to his quiet Dutch neighbours. As he was a man of property, having had a father before him, from whom he inherited large tracts of wild land, and whole barrels full of wampum, he could indulge his humours without control. Instead of staying quietly at home, eating and drinking at regular meal-times, amusing himself by smoking his pipe on the bench before the door, and then turning into a comfortable bed at night, he delighted in all kinds of rough wild expeditions. He was never so happy as when on a hunting party in the wilderness, sleeping under trees or bark sheds, or cruizing down the river, or on some woodland lake, fishing and fowling, and living the Lord knows how.

He was a great friend to Indians, and to an Indian mode of life, which he considered true natural liberty and manly enjoyment. When at home, he had always several Indian hangers-on, who loitered about his house, sleeping like hounds in the sunshine, or preparing hunting and fishing-tackle for some new expedition, or shooting at marks with bows and arrows.

Over these vagrant beings Heer Antony had as perfect command as a huntsman over his pack; though they were great nuisances to the regular people of his neighbourhood. As he was a rich man, no one ventured to thwart his humours; indeed, he had a hearty, joyous manner about him, that made him universally popular. He would troll a Dutch song as he tramped along the street; hail every one a mile off; and when he entered a house, he would slap the good man familiarly on the back, shake him by the hand till he roared, and kiss his wife and daughters before his face—in short, there was no pride nor ill humour about Heer Antony.

resides his Indian hangers-on, he had three or four humble friends among the white men, who looked up to him as a patron, and had the run of his kitchen, and the favour of being taken with him occasionally on his expeditions. It was with a medley of such retainers that he was at present on a cruise along the shores of the Hudson, in a pinnace which he kept for his own recreation. There were two white men with him, dressed partly in the Indian style, with mocassins and hunting shirts; the rest of his crew consisted of four favourite Indians. They had been prowling about the river, without any definite object, until they found themselves in the highlands; where they had passed two or three days, hunting the deer which still lingered among these mountains.

"It is a lucky circumstance, young man," said Antony Vander Heyden, "that you happened to be knocked overboard to-day, as to-morrow morning we start early on our return homewards; and you might then have looked in vain for a meal among these mountains—but come, lads, stir about! stir about! Let's see what prog we have for supper; the kettle has boiled long enough; my stomach cries cupboard: and I'll warrant our guest is in no mood to dally with his trencher."

There was a bustle now in the little encampment; one took off the kettle and turned a part of the contents into a huge wooden bowl. Another prepared a flat rock for a table; while a third brought various utensils from the pinnace, which was moored close by; and Heer Antony himself brought a flask or two of precious liquor from his own private locker; knowing his boon companions too well to trust any of them with the key.

A rude, but hearty, repast was soon spread; consisting of venison smoking from the kettle, with cold bacon, boiled Indian corn, and mighty loaves of good brown household bread. Never had Dolph made a more delicious repast; and when he had washed it down by two or three draughts from the Heer Antony's flask, and felt the jolly liquor sending its warmth through his veins, and glowing round his very heart, he would not have changed his situation, no, not with the governor of the province.

The Heer Antony, too, grew chirping and joyous; told half a dozen fat stories, at which his white followers laughed immoderately, though the Indians, as usual, maintained an invincible gravity.

"This is your true life, my boy!" said he, slapping Dolph on the shoulder; "a man is never a man till he can defy

wind and weather, range woods and wilds, sleep under a tree, and live on bass-wood leaves!"

And then would he sing a stave or two of a Dutch drinking song, swaying a short, squab Dutch bottle in his hand, while his myrmidons would join in chorus, until the woods echoed again: as the good old song has it—

"They all with a shout made the elements ring,
So soon as the office was o'er;
To feasting they went, with true merriment,
And tipped strong liquor gillore."

In the midst of his joviality, however, Heer Antony did not lose sight of discretion. Though he pushed the bottle without reserve to Dolph, yet he always took care to help his followers himself, knowing the beings he had to deal with; and he was particular in granting but a moderate allowance to the Indians. The repast being ended, the Indians having drunk their liquor, and smoked their pipes, now wrapped themselves in their blankets, stretched themselves on the ground, with their feet to the fire, and soon fell asleep, like so many tired hounds. The rest of the party remained chatting before the fire, which the gloom of the forest, and the dampness of the air from the late storm, rendered extremely grateful and comforting. The conversation gradually moderated from the hilarity of supper-time, and turned upon hunting adventures, and exploits and perils in the wilderness; many of which were so strange and improbable that I will not venture to repeat them, lest the veracity of Antony Vander Heyden and his comrades should be brought into question. There were many legendary tales told, also, about the river, and the settlements on its borders: in which valuable kind of lore the Heer Antony seemed deeply versed. As the sturdy bush-beater sat in a twisted root of a tree, that served him for a kind of arm-chair, dealing forth these wild stories, with the fire gleaming on his strongly-marked visage, Dolph was again repeatedly perplexed by something that reminded him of the phantom of the Haunted House; some vague resemblance that could not be fixed upon any precise feature or lineament, but which pervaded the general air of his countenance and figure.

The circumstance of Dolph's falling overboard being again discussed, led to the relation of divers disasters and singular mishaps that had befallen voyagers on this great river, particularly in the earlier periods of colonial history; most of which the Heer deliberately attributed to supernatural causes.

Dolph started at the suggestion; but the old gentleman assured him that it was very currently believed by the settlers along the river that these highlands were, under the dominion of supernatural and mischievous beings, which seemed to have taken some pique against the Dutch colonists in the early time of the settlement. In consequence of this, they have ever since taken particular delight in venting their spleen, and indulging their humours, upon the Dutch skippers; bothering them with flaws, headwinds, counter-currents, and all kinds of impediments; insomuch that a Dutch navigator was always obliged to be exceedingly wary and deliberate in his proceedings: to come to anchor at dusk; to drop his peak, or take in sail, whenever he saw a swag-bellied cloud rolling over the mountains; in short, to take so many precautions, that he was often apt to be an incredible time in toiling up the river.

Some, he said, believed these mischievous powers of the air to be evil spirits conjured up by the Indian wizards, in the early times of the province, to revenge themselves on the strangers who had dispossessed them of their country. They even attributed to their incantations the misadventure which befell the renowned Hendrick Hudson, when he sailed so gallantly up this river in quest of a north-west passage, and, as he thought, ran his ship aground; which, they affirm, was nothing more nor less than a spell of those same wizards, to prevent his getting to China in this direction.

The greater part, however, Heer Antony observed, accounted for all the extraordinary circumstances attending the river, and the perplexities of the skippers which navigated it, by the old legend of the Storm-Ship which haunted Point-no-Point. On finding Dolph to be utterly ignorant of this tradition, the Heer stared at him for a moment with surprise, and wondered where he had passed his life, to be uninformed on so important a point of history. To pass away the remainder of the evening, therefore, he undertook the tale, as far as his memory would serve, in the very words in which it had been written out by Mynheer Selyne, an early poet of the New Nederlandts. Giving, then, a stir to the fire, that sent up its sparks among the trees like a little volcano, he adjusted himself comfortably in his root of a tree; and throwing back his head and closing his eyes for a few moments, to summon his recollection, he related the following legend.

THE STORM-SHIP.

In the golden age of the province of the New Netherlands, when it was under the sway of Wouter Van Twiller, otherwise called the Doubter, the people of the Manhattoes were alarmed one sultry afternoon, just about the time of the summer solstice, by a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning. The rain descended in such torrents as absolutely to spatter up and smoke along the ground. It seemed as if the thunder rattled and rolled over the very roofs of the houses; the lightning was seen to play about the church of St. Nicholas, and to strive three times, in vain, to strike its weathercock. Garret Van Horne's new chimney was split almost from top to bottom; and Doffue Mildeberger was struck speechless from his bald-faced mare, just as he was riding into town. In a word, it was one of those unparalleled storms, that only happen once within the memory of that venerable personage, known in all towns by the appellation of "the oldest inhabitant."

Great was the terror of the good old women of the Manhattoes. They gathered their children together, and took refuge in the cellars; after having hung a shoe on the iron point of every bed-post, lest it should attract the lightning. At length the storm abated; the thunder sunk into a growl, and the setting sun, breaking from under the fringed borders of the clouds, made the broad bosom of the bay to gleam like a sea of molten gold.

The word was given from the fort that a ship was standing up the bay. It passed from mouth to mouth, and street to street, and soon put the little capital in a bustle. The arrival of a ship, in those early times of the settlement, was an event of vast importance to the inhabitants. It brought them news from the old word, from the land of their birth, from which they were so completely severed: to the yearly ship, too, they looked for their supply of luxuries, of finery, of comforts, and almost of necessaries. The good vrouw could not have her new cap nor new gown until the arrival of the ship; the artist waited for it for his tools, the burgomaster for his pipe and his supply of Hollands, the schoolboy for his top and marbles, and the lordly landholder for the bricks with which he was to build his new mansion. Thus every one, rich and poor, great and small, looked out for the arrival of the ship. It was the great yearly event of the town of New Amsterdam; and from one end of the year to the other, the ship, the ship, the ship, was the continual topic of conversation.

The news from the fort, therefore, brought all the populace down to the battery, to behold the wished-for sight. It was not exactly the time when she had been expected to arrive, and the circumstance was a matter of some speculation. Many were the groups collected about the battery. Here and there might be seen a burgomaster of slow and pompous gravity, giving his opinion with great confidence to a crowd of old women and idle boys. At another place was a knot of old weather-beaten fellows, who had been seamen or fishermen in their times, and were great authorities on such occasions; these gave different opinions, and caused great disputes among their several adherents; but the man most looked up to, and followed and watched by the crowd, was Hans Van Pelt, an old Dutch sea-captain retired from service, the nautical oracle of the place. He reconnoitred the ship through an ancient telescope, covered with tarry canvass, hummed a Dutch tune to himself, and said nothing. A hum, however, from Hans Van Pelt had always more weight with the public than a speech from another man.

In the meantime the ship became more distinct to the naked eye; she was a stout, round, Dutch-built vessel, with high bow, and poop, and bearing Dutch colours. The evening sun gilded her bellying canvas, as she came riding over the long waving billows. The sentinel, who had given notice of her approach, declared that he first got sight of her when she was in the centre of the bay; and that she broke suddenly on his sight, just as if she had come out of the bosom of the black thunder-cloud. The bystanders looked at Hans Van Pelt, to see what he would say to this report: Hans Van Pelt screwed his mouth closer together, and said nothing; upon which some shook their heads, and others shrugged their shoulders.

The ship was now repeatedly hailed, but made no reply, and, passing by the fort, stood on up the Hudson. A gun was brought to bear on her, and, with some difficulty, loaded and fired by Hans Van Pelt, the garrison not being expert in artillery. The shot seemed absolutely to pass through the ship, and to skip along the water on the other side, but no notice was taken of it! What was strange, she had all her sails set, and sailed right against wind and tide, which were both down the river. Upon this Hans Van Pelt, who was likewise harbour-master, ordered his boat, and set off to board her; but after rowing two or three hours, he returned without success. Sometimes he would get within one or two

hundred yards of her, and then, in a twinkling, she would be half a mile off. Some said it was because his oarsmen, who were rather pursy, and short-winded, stopped every now and then to take breath, and spit on their hands; but this, it is probable, was a mere scandal. He got near enough, however, to see the crew; who were all dressed in the Dutch style, the officers in doublets, and high hats and feathers; not a word was spoken by any one on board; they stood as motionless as so many statues, and the ship seemed as if left to her own government. Thus she kept on, away up the river, lessening and lessening in the evening sunshine, until she faded from sight, like a little white cloud melting away in the summer sky.

The appearance of this ship threw the governor into one of the deepest doubts that ever beset him in the whole course of his administration. Fears were entertained for the security of the infant settlements on the river, lest this might be an enemy's ship in disguise, sent to take possession. The governor called together his council repeatedly to assist him with their conjectures. He sat in his chair of state, built of timber from the sacred forest of the Hague, and smoked his long jasmin pipe, and listened to all that his councillors had to say on a subject about which they knew nothing; but in spite of all the conjecturing of the sagest and oldest heads, the governor still continued to doubt.

Messengers were despatched to different places on the river; but they returned without any tidings—the ship had made no port. Day after day, and week after week, elapsed, but she never returned down the Hudson. As, however, the council seemed solicitous for intelligence, they had it in abundance. The captains of the sloops seldom arrived without bringing some report of having seen the strange ship at different parts of the river; sometimes near the Pallisadoes, sometimes off Croton Point, and sometimes in the highlands; but she never was reported as having been seen above the highlands. The crews of the sloops, it is true, generally differed among themselves in their accounts of these apparitions; but that may have arisen from the uncertain situations in which they saw her. Sometimes it was by the flashes of the thunder-storm lighting up a pitchy night, and giving glimpses of her career-ing across Tappaan Zee, or the wide waste of Haverstraw Bay. At one moment she would appear close upon them, as if likely to run them down, and would throw them into great bustle

and alarm; but the next flash would show her far off, always sailing against the wind. Sometimes, in quiet moonlight nights, she would be seen under some high bluff of the highlands, all in deep shadow, excepting her top-sails glittering in the moon-beams: by the time, however, that the voyagers would reach the place, there would be no ship to be seen; and when they had passed on for some distance, and looked back, behold! there she was again, with her top-sails in the moon-shine! Her appearance was always just after, or just before, or just in the midst of unruly weather; and she was known by all the skippers and voyagers of the Hudson by the name of "The Storm-Ship."

These reports perplexed the governor and his council more than ever; and it would be endless to repeat the conjectures and opinions that were uttered on the subject. Some quoted cases in point, of ships seen off the coast of New England, navigated by witches and goblins. Old Hans Van Pelt, who had been more than once to the Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope, insisted that this must be the flying Dutchman which had so long haunted Table Bay; but being unable to make port, had now sought another harbour. Others suggested, that, if it really was a supernatural apparition, as there was every natural reason to believe, it might be Hendrick Hudson, and his crew of the Half-moon; who, it was well known, had once run aground in the upper part of the river, in seeking a north-west passage to China. This opinion had very little weight with the governor, but it passed current out of doors; for indeed it had already been reported that Hendrick Hudson and his crew haunted the Kaatskill Mountain; and it appeared very reasonable to suppose that his ship might infest the river where the enterprise was baffled, or that it might bear the shadowy crew to their periodical revels in the mountain.

Other events occurred to occupy the thoughts and doubts of the sage Wouter and his council, and the Storm-Ship ceased to be a subject of deliberation at the board. It continued, however, to be a matter of popular belief and marvellous anecdote through the whole time of the Dutch government, and particularly just before the capture of New Amsterdam, and the subjugation of the province by the English squadron. About that time the Storm-Ship was repeatedly seen in the Tappaan Zee, and about Weehawk, and even down as far as Hoboken; and her appearance was supposed to be ominous of the approaching squall in public affairs, and the downfall of Dutch domination.

Since that time we have no authentic accounts of her; though it is said she still haunts the highlands, and cruizes about Point-no-Point. People who live along the river insist that they sometimes hear her in summer moonlight; and that in a deep still midnight they have heard the chant of her crew, as if heaving the lead; but sights and sounds are so deceptive along the mountainous shores, and about the wide bays and long reaches of this great river, that I confess I have very strong doubts upon the subject.

It is certain, nevertheless, that strange things have been seen in these highlands in storms, which are considered as connected with the old story of the ship. The captains of the river craft talk of a little bulbous-bottomed Dutch goblin. in trunk hose and sugar-loafed hat, with a speaking-trumpet in his hand, which they say keeps about the Dunderberg.* They declare that they have heard him, in stormy weather, in the midst of the turmoil, giving orders in low Dutch for the piping up of a fresh gust of wind, or the rattling off of another thunder-clap. That sometimes he has been seen surrounded by a crew of little imps in broad breeches and short doublets, tumbling head over heels in the rack and mist, and playing a thousand gambols in the air; or buzzing like a swarm of flies about Anthony's Nose; and that, at such times, the hurry-scurry of the storm was always greatest. One time a sloop, in passing by the Dunderberg, was overtaken by a thunder-gust, that came scouring round the mountain, and seemed to burst just over the vessel. Though tight and well ballasted, yet she laboured dreadfully, until the water came over the gunwale. All the crew were amazed when it was discovered that there was a little white sugar-loaf hat on the mast-head, which was known at once to be the hat of the Heer of the Dunderberg. Nobody, however, dared to climb to the mast-head, and get rid of this terrible hat. The sloop continued labouring and rocking, as if she would have rolled her mast overboard. She seemed in continual danger either of upsetting or of running on shore. In this way she drove quite through the highlands, until she had passed Pollopol's Island, where, it is said, the jurisdiction of the Dunderberg potentate ceases. No sooner had she passed this bourne, than the little hat, all at once, spun up into the air like a top; whirled up all the clouds into a vortex, and hurried them back to the summit of the Dunderberg; while the sloop righted herself, and sailed

* *i. e.*, the "Thunder-Mountain," so called from its echoes.

on as quietly as if in a mill-pond. Nothing saved her from utter wreck but the fortunate circumstance of having a horse-shoe nailed against the mast; a wise precaution against evil spirits, which has since been adopted by all the Dutch captains that navigate this haunted river.

There is another story told of this foul-weather urchin, by Skipper Daniel Ouslesticker, of Fish Hill, who was never known to tell a lie. He declared, that, in a severe squall, he saw him seated astride of his bowsprit, riding the sloop ashore, full butt against Anthony's Nose, and that he was exorcised by Dominie Van Gieson, of Esopus, who happened to be on board, and who sung the hymn of St. Nicholas; whereupon the goblin threw himself up in the air like a ball, and went off in a whirlwind, carrying away with him the nightcap of the dominie's wife; which was discovered the next Sunday morning, hanging on the weathercock of Esopus' church steeple, at least forty miles off! After several events of this kind had taken place, the regular skippers of the river, for a long time, did not venture to pass the Dunderberg, without lowering their peaks, out of homage to the Heer of the mountain; and it was observed that all such as paid this tribute of respect were suffered to pass unmolested.

"Such," said Antony Vander Heyden, "are a few of the stories written down by Selyne the poet, concerning this Storm-Ship, which he affirms to have brought this colony of mischievous imps into the province, from some old ghost-ridden country of Europe. I could give you a host more, if necessary; for all the accidents that so often befall the river craft in the highlands are said to be tricks played off by these imps of the Dunderberg; but I see that you are nodding, so let us turn in for the night."

The moon had just raised her silver horns above the round back of old Bull Hill, and lit up the gray rocks and shagged forests, and glittered on the waving bosom of the river. The night dew was falling, and the late gloomy mountains began to soften and put on a gray aerial tint in the dewy light. The hunters stirred the fire, and threw on fresh fuel to qualify the damp of the night air. They then prepared a bed of branches and dry leaves under a ledge of rocks for Dolph; while Antony Vander Heyden, wrapping himself up in a huge coat made of skins, stretched himself before the fire. It was some time, however, before Dolph could close his eyes. He

lay contemplating the strange scene before him: the wild woods and rocks around; the fire throwing fitful gleams on the faces of the sleeping savages; and the Heer Antony, too, who so singularly, yet vaguely, reminded him of the nightly visitant to the Haunted House. Now and then he heard the cry of some animal from the forest; or the hooting of the owl; or the notes of the whip-poor-will, which seemed to abound among these solitudes; or the splash of a sturgeon leaping out of the river, and falling back full length on its placid surface. He contrasted all this with his accustomed nest in the garret-room of the doctor's mansion; where the only sounds he heard at night were the church clock telling the hour; the drowsy voice of the watchmen, drawling out all was well; the deep snoring of the doctor's clubbed nose from below stairs; or the cautious labours of some carpenter rat gnawing in the wainscot. His thoughts then wandered to his poor old mother: what would she think of his mysterious disappearance—what anxiety and distress would she not suffer? This was the thought that would continually intrude itself to mar his present enjoyment. It brought with it a feeling of pain and compunction, and he fell asleep with the tears yet standing in his eyes.

Were this a mere tale of fancy, here would be a fine opportunity for weaving in strange adventures among these wild mountains, and roving hunters; and, after involving my hero in a variety of perils and difficulties, rescuing him from them all by some miraculous contrivance; but as this is absolutely a true story, I must content myself with simple facts, and keep to probabilities.

At an early hour of the next day, therefore, after a hearty morning's meal, the encampment broke up, and our adventurers embarked in the pinnacle of Antony Vander Heyden. There being no wind for the sails, the Indians rowed her gently along, keeping time to a kind of chant of one of the white men. The day was serene and beautiful; the river without a wave; and as the vessel cleft the glassy water, it left a long undulating track behind. The crows, who had scented the hunter's banquet, were already gathering and hovering in the air, just where a column of thin, blue smoke, rising from among the trees, showed the place of their last night's quarters. As they coasted along the bases of the mountains, the Heer Antony pointed out to Dolph a bald eagle, the sovereign of these regions, who sat perched on a

dry tree that projected over the river; and, with eye turned upwards, seemed to be drinking in the splendour of the morning sun. Their approach disturbed the monarch's meditations. He first spread one wing, and then the other; balanced himself for a moment; and then, quitting his perch with dignified composure, wheeled slowly over their heads. Dolph snatched up a gun, and sent a whistling ball after him that cut some of the feathers from his wing: the report of the gun leaped sharply from rock to rock, and awakened a thousand echoes; but the monarch of the air sailed calmly on, ascending higher and higher, and wheeling widely as he ascended, soaring up the green bosom of the woody mountain, until he disappeared over the brow of a beetling precipice. Dolph felt in a manner rebuked by this proud tranquillity, and almost reproached himself for having so wantonly insulted this majestic bird. Heer Antony told him, laughing, to remember that he was not yet out of the territories of the lord of the Dunderberg; and an old Indian shook his head, and observed that there was bad luck in killing an eagle; the hunter, on the contrary, should always leave him a portion of his spoils.

Nothing, however, occurred to molest them on their voyage. They passed pleasantly through magnificent and lonely scenes, until they came to where Polopol's Island lay, like a floating bower, at the extremity of the highlands. Here they landed until the heat of the day should abate, or a breeze spring up, that might supersede the labour of the oar. Some prepared the mid-day meal, while others reposed under the shade of the trees in luxurious summer indolence, looking drowsily forth upon the beauty of the scene. On the one side were the highlands, vast and cragged, feathered to the top with forests, and throwing their shadows on the glassy water that dimpled at their feet. On the other side was a wide expanse of the river, like a broad lake, with long sunny reaches, and green headlands; and the distant line of Shawungunk mountains waving along a clear horizon, or chequered by a fleecy cloud.

But I forbear to dwell on the particulars of their cruise along the river; this vagrant, amphibious life, careering across silver sheets of water; coasting wild woodland shores; banqueting on shady promontories, with the spreading tree overhead, the river curling its light foam to one's feet, and distant mountain, and rock, and tree, and snowy cloud, and deep blue sky, all mingling in summer beauty before one; all this,

though never cloying in the enjoyment, would be but tedious in narration.

When encamped by the water side, some of the party would go into the woods and hunt; others would fish; sometimes they would amuse themselves by shooting at a mark, by leaping, by running, by wrestling; and Dolph gained great favour in the eyes of Antony Vander Heyden, by his skill and adroitness in all these exercises; which the Heer considered as the highest of manly accomplishments.

Thus did they coast jollily on, choosing only the pleasant hours for voyaging; sometimes in the cool morning dawn, sometimes in the sober evening twilight, and sometimes when the moonshine spangled the crisp curling waves that whispered along the sides of their little bark. Never had Dolph felt so completely in his element; never had he met with anything so completely to his taste as this wild, hap-hazard life. He was the very man to second Antony Vander Heyden in his rambling humours, and gained continually on his affections. The heart of the old bush-whacker yearned towards the young man, who seemed thus growing up in his own likeness; and as they approached to the end of their voyage, he could not help inquiring a little into his history. Dolph frankly told him his course of life, his severe medical studies, his little proficiency, and his very dubious prospects. The Heer was shocked to find that such amazing talents and accomplishments were to be cramped and buried under a doctor's wig. He had a sovereign contempt for the healing art, having never had any other physician than the butcher. He bore a mortal grudge to all kinds of study also, ever since he had been flogged about an unintelligible book when he was a boy. But to think that a young fellow like Dolph, of such wonderful abilities, who could shoot, fish, run, jump, ride, and wrestle, should be obliged to roll pills, and administer juleps for a living—twas monstrous! He told Dolph never to despair, but to "throw physic to the dogs;" for a young fellow of his prodigious talents could never fail to make his way. "As you seem to have no acquaintance in Albany," said Heer Antony, "you shall go home with me, and remain under my roof until you can look about you; and in the meantime we can take an occasional bout at shooting and fishing, for it is a pity such talents should lie idle."

Dolph, who was at the mercy of chance, was not hard to be persuaded. Indeed, on turning over matters in his mind,

which he did very sagely and deliberately, he could not but think that Antony Vander Heyden was, "some how or other," connected with the story of the Haunted House; that the misadventure in the highlands, which had thrown them so strangely together, was, "some how or other," to work out something good: in short, there is nothing so convenient as this "some how or other" way of accommodating one's self to circumstances; it is the main stay of a heedless actor and tardy reasoner, like Dolph Heyliger; and he who can, in this loose, easy way, link foregone evil to anticipated good, possesses a secret of happiness almost equal to the philosopher's stone.

On their arrival at Albany, the sight of Dolph's companion seemed to cause universal satisfaction. Many were the greetings at the river side, and the salutations in the streets; the dogs bounded before him; the boys whooped as he passed; every body seemed to know Antony Vander Heyden. Dolph followed on in silence, admiring the neatness of this worthy burgh; for in those days Albany was in all its glory, and inhabited almost exclusively by the descendants of the original Dutch settlers, for it had not as yet been discovered and colonized by the restless people of New England. Everything was quiet and orderly; everything was conducted calmly and leisurely; no hurry, no bustle, no struggling and scrambling for existence. The grass grew about the unpaved streets, and relieved the eye by its refreshing verdure. Tall sycamores or pendant willows shaded the houses, with caterpillars swinging in long silken strings from their branches; or moths, fluttering about like coxcombs, in joy at their gay transformation. The houses were built in the old Dutch style, with the gable ends towards the street. The thrifty housewife was seated on a bench before her door, in close-crimped cap, bright-flowered gown, and white apron, busily employed in knitting. The husband smoked his pipe on the opposite bench, and the little pet negro girl, seated on the step at her mistress's feet, was industriously plying her needle. The swallows sported about the eaves, or skimmed along the streets, and brought back some rich booty for their clamorous young; and the little housekeeping wren flew in and out of a Lilliputian house, or an old hat nailed against the wall. The cows were coming home, lowing through the streets, to be milked at their owner's door; and if, perchance, there were any loiterers, some negro urchin, with a long goad, was gently urging them homewards.

As Dolph's companion passed on, he received a tranquil nod from the burghers, and a friendly word from their wives, all calling him familiarly by the name of Antony; for it was the custom in this stronghold of the patriarchs, where they had all grown up together from childhood, to call every one by the Christian name. The Heer did not pause to have his usual jokes with them, for he was impatient to reach his home. At length they arrived at his mansion. It was of some magnitude, in the Dutch style, with large iron figures on the gables, that gave the date of its erection, and showed that it had been built in the earliest times of the settlement.

The news of the Heer Antony's arrival had preceded him, and the whole household was on the look-out. A crew of negroes, large and small, had collected in front of the house to receive him. The old white-headed one, who had grown gray in his service, grinned for joy, and made many awkward bows and grimaces, and the little ones capered about his knees. But the most happy being in the household was a little, plump, blooming lass, his only child and the darling of his heart. She came bounding out of the house; but the sight of a strange young man with her father called up for a moment all the bashfulness of a home-bred damsel. Dolph gazed at her with wonder and delight; never had he seen, as he thought, anything so comely in the shape of woman. She was dressed in the good old Dutch taste, with long stays and full, short petticoats, so admirably adapted to show and set off the female form. Her hair, turned up under a small round cap, displayed the fairness of her forehead; she had fine blue, laughing eyes; a trim, slender waist, and soft swell—but, in a word, she was a little Dutch divinity; and Dolph, who never stooped half way in a new impulse, fell desperately in love with her.

Dolph was now ushered into the house with a hearty welcome. In the interior was a mingled display of Heer Antony's tastes and habits, and of the opulence of his predecessors. The chambers were furnished with good old mahogany; the beaufets and cupboards glittered with embossed silver and painted china. Over the parlour fire-place was, as usual, the family coat-of-arms painted and framed, above which was a long duck fowling-piece, flanked by an Indian pouch and a powder-horn. The room was decorated with many Indian articles, such as pipes of peace, tomahawks, scalping knives, hunting pouches, and belts of wampum; and

there were various kinds of fishing-tackle, and two or three fowling-pieces in the corners. The household affairs seemed to be conducted in some measure after the master's humours; corrected, perhaps, by a little quiet management of the daughter. There was a great degree of patriarchal simplicity and good-humoured indulgence. The negroes came into the room without being called, merely to look at their master and hear of his adventures: they would stand listening at the door until he had finished a story, and then go off on a broad grin to repeat it in the kitchen. A couple of pet negro children were playing about the floor with the dogs, and sharing with them their bread-and-butter. All the domestics looked hearty and happy: and when the table was set for the evening repast, the variety and abundance of good household luxuries bore testimony to the open-handed liberality of the Heer, and the notable housewifery of his daughter.

In the evening there dropped in several of the worthies of the place, the Van Rennsellaers, and the Ganseverts, and the Rosebooms, and others of Antony Vander Heyden's intimates, to hear an account of his expedition; for he was the Sindbad of Albany, and his exploits and adventures were favourite topics of conversation among the inhabitants. While these sat gossiping together about the door of the hall, and telling long twilight stories, Dolph was cozily seated, entertaining the daughter on a window-bench. He had already got on intimate terms; for those were not times of false reserve and idle ceremony; and, besides, there is something wonderfully propitious to a lover's suit, in the delightful dusk of a long summer evening; it gives courage to the most timid tongue, and hides the blushes of the bashful. The stars alone twinkled brightly: and now and then a fire-fly streamed his transient light before the window, or, wandering into the room, flew gleaming about the ceiling.

What Dolph whispered in her ear that long summer evening it is impossible to say: his words were so low and indistinct, that they never reached the ear of the historian. It is probable, however, that they were to the purpose; for he had a natural talent at pleasing the sex, and was never long in company with a petticoat without paying proper court to it. In the meantime the visitors, one by one, departed; Antony Vander Heyden, who had fairly talked himself silent, sat nodding alone in his chair by the door, when he was suddenly aroused by a hearty salute with which Dolph Heyliger had

unguardedly rounded off one of his periods, and which echoed through the still chamber like the report of a pistol. The Heer started up, rubbed his eyes, called for lights, and observed that it was high time to go to bed; though, on parting for the night, he squeezed Dolph heartily by the hand, looked kindly in his face, and shook his head knowingly; for the Heer well remembered what he himself had been at the youngster's age.

The chamber in which our hero was lodged was spacious, and pannelled with oak. It was furnished with clothes-presses, and mighty chests of drawers, well waxed, and glittering with brass ornaments. These contained ample stock of family linen; for the Dutch housewives had always a laudable pride in showing off their household treasures to strangers.

Dolph's mind, however, was too full to take particular note of the objects around him; yet he could not help continually comparing the free, open-hearted cheeriness of this establishment with the starveling, sordid, joyless housekeeping, at Dr. Knipperhausen's. Still there was something that marred the enjoyment; the idea that he must take leave of his hearty host, and pretty hostess, and cast himself once more adrift upon the world. To linger here would be folly; he should only get deeper in love; and for a poor varlet, like himself, to aspire to the daughter of the great Heer Vander Heyden—it was madness to think of such a thing! The very kindness that the girl had shown towards him prompted him, on reflection, to hasten his departure; it would be a poor return for the frank hospitality of his host to entangle his daughter's heart in an injudicious attachment. In a word, Dolph was, like many other young reasoners, of exceeding good hearts, and giddy heads; who think after they act, and act differently from what they think; who make excellent determinations over night, and forget to keep them the next morning.

"This is a fine conclusion, truly, of my voyage," said he, as he almost buried himself in a sumptuous feather-bed, and drew the fresh, white sheets up to his chin. "Here I am, instead of finding a bag of money to carry home, launched in a strange place, with scarcely a stiver in my pocket; and, what is worse, have jumped ashore up to my very ears in love into the bargain. However," added he, after some pause, stretching himself, and turning himself in bed, "I'm in good quarters for the present, at least; so I'll e'en enjoy the present moment, and let the next take care of himself; I dare say all will work out, 'some how or other,' for the best."

As he said these words, he reached out his hand to extinguish the candle, when he was suddenly struck with astonishment and dismay, for he thought he beheld the phantom of the Haunted House staring on him from a dusky part of the chamber. A second look reassured him, as he perceived that what he had taken for the spectre was, in fact, nothing but a Flemish portrait, that hung in a shadowy corner, just behind a clothes-press. It was, however, the precise representation of his nightly visitor. The same cloak and belted jerkin, the same grizzled beard and fixed eye, the same broad slouched hat, with a feather hanging over one side. Dolph now called to mind the resemblance he had frequently remarked between his host and the old man of the Haunted House; and was fully convinced that they were in some way connected, and that some especial destiny had governed his voyage. He lay gazing on the portrait with almost as much awe as he had gazed on the ghostly original, until the shrill house clock warned him of the lateness of the hour. He put out the light: but remained for a long time turning over these curious circumstances and coincidences in his mind, until he fell asleep. His dreams partook of the nature of his waking thoughts. He fancied that he still lay gazing on the picture, until, by degrees, it became animated; that the figure descended from the wall, and walked out of the room; that he followed it, and found himself by the well, to which the old man pointed, smiled on him, and disappeared.

In the morning, when Dolph waked, he found his host standing by his bed-side, who gave him a hearty morning's salutation, and asked him how he had slept. Dolph answered cheerily; but took occasion to inquire about the portrait that hung against the wall. "Ah," said Heer Antony, "that's a portrait of old Killian Vander Spiegel, once a burgomaster of Amsterdam, who, on some popular troubles, abandoned Holland, and came over to the province during the government of Peter Stuyvesant. He was my ancestor by the mother's side, and an old miserly curmudgeon he was. When the English took possession of New Amsterdam, in 1664, he retired into the country. He fell into a melancholy, apprehending that his wealth would be taken from him, and that he would come to beggary. He turned all his property into cash, and used to hide it away. He was for a year or two concealed in various places, fancying himself sought after by the English to strip him of his wealth; and finally was found dead in his

bed one morning, without any one being able to discover where he had concealed the greater part of his money."

When his host had left the room, Dolph remained for some time lost in thought. His whole mind was occupied by what he had heard. Vander Spiegel was his mother's family name; and he recollected to have heard her speak of this very Killian Vander Spiegel as one of her ancestors. He had heard her say, too, that her father was Killian's rightful heir, only that the old man died without leaving anything to be inherited. It now appeared that Heer Antony was likewise a descendant, and perhaps an heir also, of this poor rich man; and that thus the Heyligers and the Vander Heydens were remotely connected. "What," thought he; "if, after all, this is the interpretation of my dream, that this is the way I am to make my fortune by this voyage to Albany, and that I am to find the old man's hidden wealth in the bottom of that well? But what an odd round about mode of communicating the matter! Why the plague could not the old goblin have told me about the well at once, without sending me all the way to Albany to hear a story that was to send me all the way back again?"

These thoughts passed through his mind while he was dressing. He descended the stairs full of perplexity, when the bright face of Marie Vander Heyden suddenly beamed in smiles upon him, and seemed to give him a clue to the whole mystery. "After all," thought he, "the old goblin is in the right. If I am to get his wealth, he means that I shall marry his pretty descendant; thus both branches of the family will be again united, and the property go on in the proper channel."

No sooner did this idea enter his head, than it carried conviction with it. He was now all impatience to hurry back and secure the treasure, which, he did not doubt, lay at the bottom of the well, and which he feared every moment might be discovered by some other person. "Who knows," thought he, "but this night-walking old fellow of the Haunted House may be in the habit of haunting every visitor, and may give a hint to some shrewder fellow than myself, who will make a shorter cut to the well than by the way of Albany." He wished a thousand times that the babbling old ghost ~~was~~ laid in the Red Sea, and his rambling ~~per~~ trait with him. He ~~was~~ was in a perfect fever to depart. Two or three days elapsed, before any opportunity presented for returning down ~~and~~ the river. They were ages to Dolph, notwithstanding that he was basking in the smiles of the pretty Marie, and daily getting more and more enamoured.

At length the very sloop from which he had been knocked overboard prepared to make sail. Dolph made an awkward apology to his host for his sudden departure. Antony Vander Heyden was sorely astonished. He had concerted half a dozen excursions into the wilderness; and his Indians were actually preparing for a grand expedition to one of the lakes. He took Dolph aside, and exerted his eloquence to get him to abandon all thoughts of business, and to remain with him, but in vain; and he at length gave up the attempt, observing, "that it was a thousand pities so fine a young man should throw himself away." Heer Antony, however, gave him a hearty shake by the hand at parting, with a favourite fowling-piece, and an invitation to come to his house whenever he revisited Albany. The pretty little Marie said nothing; but, as he gave her a farewell kiss, her dimpled cheek turned pale, and a tear stood in her eye.

Dolph sprang lightly on board of the vessel. They hoisted sail; the wind was fair; they soon lost sight of Albany, and its green hills, and embowered islands. They were wafted gaily past the Kaatskill mountains, whose fairy heights were bright and cloudless. They passed prosperously through the highlands, without any molestation from the Dunderberg goblin and his crew; they swept on across Haverstraw Bay, and by Croton Point, and through the Tapaan Zee, and under the Pallisadoes, until, in the afternoon of the third day, they saw the promontory of Hoboken, hanging like a cloud in the air; and shortly after, the roofs of the Manhattoes rising out of the water.

Dolph's first care was to repair to his mother's house; for he was continually goaded by the idea of the uneasiness she must experience on his account. He was puzzling his brains, as he went along, to think how he should account for his absence, without betraying the secrets of the Haunted House. In the midst of these cogitations, he entered the street in which his mother's house was situated, when he was thunder-struck at beholding it a heap of ruins.

There had evidently been a great fire, which had destroyed several large houses, and the humble dwelling of poor dame Heyliger had been involved in the conflagration. The walls were not so completely destroyed, but that Dolph could distinguish some traces of the scene of his childhood. The fire-place, about which he had often played, still remained, ornamented with Dutch tiles, illustrating passages in Bible

history, on which he had many a time gazed with admiration. Among the rubbish lay the wreck of the good dame's elbow chair, from which she had given him so many a wholesome precept; and hard by it was the family Bible, with brass clasps; now alas! reduced almost to a cinder.

For a moment, Dolph was overcome by this dismal sight, for he was seized with the fear that his mother had perished in the flames. He was relieved, however, from this horrible apprehension, by one of the neighbours, who happened to come by, and who informed him that his mother was yet alive.

The good woman had, indeed, lost everything by this unlooked-for calamity; for the populace had been so intent upon saving the fine furniture of her rich neighbours, that the little tenement and the little all of poor dame Heyliger had been suffered to consume without interruption; nay, had it not been for the gallant assistance of her old crony, Peter de Groodt, the worthy dame and her cat might have shared the fate of their habitation.

As it was, she had been overcome with fright and affliction; and lay ill in body, and sick at heart. The public, however, had showed her its wonted kindness. The furniture of her rich neighbours being, as far as possible, rescued from the flames; themselves duly and ceremoniously visited and consoled with on the injury of their property, and their ladies commiserated on the agitation of their nerves; the public, at length, began to recollect something about poor dame Heyliger. She forthwith became again a subject of universal sympathy; every body pitied her more than ever; and if pity could but have been coined into cash—good Lord! how rich she would have been!

It was now determined, in good earnest, that something ought to be done for her without delay. The Dominie, therefore, put up prayers for her on Sunday, in which all the congregation joined most heartily. Even Cobus Groesbeek, the alderman, and Mynheer Milledollar, the great Dutch merchant, stood up in their pews, and did not spare their voices on the occasion; and it was thought the prayers of such great men could not but have their due weight. Dr. Knipperhausen, too, visited her professionally, and gave her abundance of advice gratis, and was universally lauded for his charity. As to her old friend, Peter de Groodt, he was a poor man, whose pity, and prayers, and advice, could be but of little avail, so he gave her all that was in his power—he gave her shelter.

To the humble dwelling of Peter de Groodt, then, did Dolph turn his steps. On his way thither, he recalled all the tenderness and kindness of his simple-hearted parent, her indulgence of his errors, her blindness to his faults; and then he bethought himself of his own idle, harum-scarum life "I've been a sad scapegrace," said Dolph, shaking his head sorrowfully. "I've been a complete sink-pocket, that's the truth of it! But," added he briskly, and clasping his hands, "only let her live—only let her live—and I'll show myself indeed a son."

As Dolph approached the house, he met Peter de Groodt coming out of it. The old man started back aghast, doubting whether it was not a ghost that stood before him. It being bright daylight, however, Peter soon plucked up heart, satisfied that no ghost dare show his face in such clear sunshine. Dolph now learned from the worthy sexton the consternation and rumour to which his mysterious disappearance had given rise. It had been universally believed that he had been spirited away by those hobgoblin gentry that infested the Haunted House; and old Abraham Vandozer, who lived by the great Button-wood trees, at the three mile stone, affirmed, that he had heard a terrible noise in the air, as he was going home late at night, which seemed just if a flight of wild geese were over-head, passing off towards the northward. The Haunted House, was, in consequence, looked upon with ten times more awe than ever; nobody would venture to pass a night in it for the world, and even the doctor had ceased to make his expeditions to it in the day-time.

It required some preparation before Dolph's return could be made known to his mother, the poor soul having bewailed him as lost; and her spirits having been sorely broken down by a number of comforters, who daily cheered her with stories of ghosts, and of people carried away by the devil. He found her confined to her bed, with the other member of the Heyliger family, the good dame's cat, purring beside her, but sadly singed, and utterly despoiled of those whiskers which were the glory of her physiognomy. The poor woman threw her arms about Dolph's neck: "My boy! my boy! art thou still alive?" For a time she seemed to have forgotten all her losses and troubles in her joy at his return. Even the sage grimalkin showed indubitable signs of joy at the return of the youngster. She saw, perhaps, that they were a forlorn and undone family, and felt a touch of that

kindliness which fellow-sufferers only know. But, in truth, cats are a slandered people; they have more affection in them than the world commonly gives them credit for.

The good dame's eyes glistened as she saw one being at least, beside herself, rejoiced at her son's return. "Tib knows thee! poor dumb beast!" said she, smoothing down the mottled coat of her favourite; then recollecting herself, with a melancholy shake of the head, "Ah, my poor Dolph;" exclaimed she, "thy mother can help thee no longer! She can no longer help herself! What will become of thee, my poor boy?"

"Mother," said Dolph, "don't talk in that strain; I've too long been a charge-upon you; it's now my part to take care of you in your old days. Come! be of good heart! You, and I, and Tib, will all see better days. I'm here, you see, young, and sound, and hearty; then don't let us despair; I dare say things will all, somehow or other, turn out for the best."

While this scene was going on with the Heyliger family, the news was carried to Dr. Knipperhausen, of the safe return of his disciple. The little doctor scarcely knew whether to rejoice or be sorry at the tidings. He was happy at having the foul reports which had prevailed concerning his country mansion thus disproved; but he grieved at having his disciple, of whom he had supposed himself fairly disencumbered, thus drifting back, a heavy charge upon his hands. While he was balancing between these two feelings, he was determined by the counsels of Frau Ilsy, who advised him to take advantage of the truant absence of the youngster, and shut the door upon him for ever.

At the hour of bed-time, therefore, when it was supposed the recreant disciple would seek his old quarters, everything was prepared for his reception. Dolph, having talked his mother into a state of tranquillity, sought the mansion of his quondam master, and raised the knocker with a faltering hand. Scarcely, however, had it given a dubious rap, when the doctor's head, in a red night-cap, popped out of one window, and the housekeeper's, in a white night-cap, out of another. He was now greeted with a tremendous volley of hard names and hard language, mingled with invaluable pieces of advice, such as are seldom ventured to be given excepting to a friend in distress, or a culprit at the bar. In a few moments not a window in the street but had its particular night-cap, listening to the shrill treble of Frau Ilsy, and the guttural croaking of

Dr. Knipperhausen; and the word went from window to window, "Ah! here's Dolph Heyliger come back, and at his old pranks again." In short, poor Dolph found he was likely to get nothing from the doctor but good advice; a commodity so abundant as even to be thrown out of the window; so he was fain to beat a retreat, and take up his quarters for the night under the lowly roof of honest Peter de Groodt.

The next morning, bright and early, Dolph was out at the Haunted House. Everything looked just as he had left it. The fields were grass-grown and matted, and it appeared as if nobody had traversed them since his departure. With palpitating heart he hastened to the well. He looked down into it, and saw that it was of great depth, with water at the bottom. He had provided himself with a strong line, such as the fishermen use on the banks of Newfoundland. At the end was a heavy plummet and a large fish-hook. With this he began to sound the bottom of the well, and to angle about in the water. He found that the water was of some depth; there appeared also to be much rubbish, stones from the top having fallen in. Several times his hook got entangled, and he came near breaking his line. Now and then, too, he hauled up mere trash, such as the skull of a horse, an iron hoop, and a shattered iron-bound bucket. He had now been several hours employed without finding anything to repay his trouble, or to encourage him to proceed. He began to think himself a great fool, to be thus decoyed into a wild-goose chase by mere dreams, and was on the point of throwing line and all into the well, and giving up all further angling.

"One more cast of the line," said he, "and that shall be the last." As he sounded, he felt the plummet slip, as it were, through the interstices of loose stones; and as he drew back the line, he felt that the hook had taken hold of something heavy. He had to manage his line with great caution, lest it should be broken by the strain upon it. By degrees the rubbish that lay upon the article which he had hooked gave way; he drew it to the surface of the water, and what was his rapture at seeing something like silver glittering at the end of his line! Almost breathless with anxiety, he drew it up to the mouth of the well, surprised at its great weight, and fearing every instant that his hook would slip from its hold, and his prize tumble again to the bottom. At length he landed it safe beside the well. It was a great silver porringer, of an ancient form, richly embossed, and with armorial bearings similar to

those over his mother's mantel-piece, engraved on its side. The lid was fastened down by several twists of wire; Dolph loosened them with a trembling hand, and, on lifting the lid, behold! the vessel was filled with broad golden pieces, of a coinage which he had never seen before! It was evident he had lit on the place where old Killian Vander Spiegel had concealed his treasure.

Fearful of being seen by some straggler, he cautiously retired, and buried his pot of money in a secret place. He now spread terrible stories about the Haunted House, and deterred every one from approaching it, while he made frequent visits to it in stormy days, when no one was stirring in the neighbouring fields; though to tell the truth, he did not care to venture there in the dark. For once in his life he was diligent and industrious, and followed up his new trade of angling with such perseverance and success, that in a little while he had hooked up wealth enough to make him, in those moderate days, a rich burgher for life.

It would be tedious to detail minutely the rest of his story. To tell how he gradually managed to bring his property into use without exciting surprise and inquiry—how he satisfied all scruples with regard to retaining the property, and at the same time gratified his own feelings by marrying the pretty Marie Vander Heyden—and how he and Heer Antony had many a merry and roving expedition together.

I must not omit to say, however, that Dolph took his mother home to live with him, and cherished her in her old days. The good dame, too, had the satisfaction of no longer hearing her son made the theme of censure; on the contrary, he grew daily in public esteem; every body spoke well of him and his wines; and the lordliest burgomaster was never known to decline his invitation to dinner. Dolph often related, at his own table, the wicked pranks which had once been the abhorrence of the town; but they were now considered excellent jokes, and the gravest dignitary was fain to hold his sides when listening to them. No one was more struck with Dolph's increasing merit than his old master the doctor; and so forgiving was Dolph, that he absolutely employed the doctor as his family physician, only taking care that his prescriptions should be always thrown out of the window. His mother had often her junto of old cronies to take a snug cup of tea with her in her comfortable little parlour and Peter de Groodt, as he sat by the fireside, with

one of her grand-children on his knee, would many a time congratulate her upon her son turning out so great a man; upon which the good old soul would wag her head with exultation, and exclaim, "Ah, neighbour, neighbour! did I not say that Dolph would one day or other hold up his head with the best of them."

Thus did Dolph Heyliger go on, cheerily and prosperously, growing merrier as he grew older and wiser, and completely falsifying the old proverb about money got over the devil's back; for he made a good use of his wealth, and became a distinguished citizen, and a valuable member of the community. He was a great promoter of public institutions, such as beef-steak societies and catch-clubs. He presided at all public dinners, and was the first that introduced turtle from the West Indies. He improved the breed of race-horses and game-cocks, and was so great a patron of modest merit, that any one who could sing a good song, or tell a good story, was sure to find a place at his table.

He was a member, too, of the corporation, made several laws for the protection of game and oysters, and bequeathed to the board a large silver punch-bowl, made out of the identical porringer before mentioned, and which is in the possession of the corporation to this very day.

Finally, he died, in a florid old age, of an apoplexy at a corporation feast, and was buried with great honours in the yard of the little Dutch church in Garden street, where his tombstone may still be seen, with a modest epitaph in Dutch, by his friend Mynheer Justus Benson, an ancient and excellent poet of the province.

The foregoing tale rests on better authority than most tales of the kind, as I have it at second-hand from the lips of Dolph Heyliger himself. He never related it till towards the latter part of his life, and then in great confidence (for he was very discreet), to a few of his particular cronies at his own table, over a supernumerary bowl of punch; and, strange as the hobgoblin parts of the story may seem, there never was a single doubt expressed on the subject by any of his guests. It may not be amiss, before concluding, to observe that, in addition to his other accomplishments, Dolph Heyliger was noted for being the ablest drawer of the long-bow in the whole province.

THE WEDDING.

No more, no more, much honor aye betide
 The lofty bridegroom, and the lovely bride;
 That all of their succeeding days may say,
 Each day appears like to a wedding day.

BRAITHWAITE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the doubts and demurs of Lady Lillycraft, and all the grave objections that were conjured up against the month of May, yet the Wedding has at length happily taken place. It was celebrated at the village church in presence of a numerous company of relatives and friends, and many of the tenantry. The squire must needs have something of the old ceremonies observed on the occasion; so at the gate of the churchyard, several little girls of the village, dressed in white, were in readiness with baskets of flowers, which they strewed before the bride; and the butler bore before her the bride-cup, a great silver embossed bowl, one of the family reliques from the days of the hard drinkers. This was filled with rich wine, and decorated with a branch of rosemary, tied with gay ribands, according to ancient custom.

"Happy is the bride that the sun shines on," says the old proverb; and it was as sunny and auspicious a morning as heart could wish. The bride looked uncommonly beautiful; but, in fact, what woman does not look interesting on her wedding-day? I know no sight more charming and touching than that of a young and timid bride, in her robes of virgin white, led up trembling to the altar. When I thus behold a lovely girl, in the tenderness of her years, forsaking the house of her fathers and the home of her childhood, and, with the implicit, confiding, and the sweet self-abandonment which belong to woman, giving up all the world for the man of her choice; when I hear her, in the good old language of the ritual, yielding herself to him "for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health; to love, honour, and obey, till death us do part," it brings to my mind the beautiful and affecting self-devotion of Ruth:—"Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

The fair Julia was supported on the trying occasion by Lady Lillycraft, whose heart was overflowing with its wonted sympathy in all matters of love and matrimony. As the bride approached the altar, her face would be one moment covered with blushes, and the next deadly pale; and she seemed almost ready to shrink from sight among her female companions.

I do not know what it is that makes every one serious, and, as it were, awe-struck at a marriage ceremony, which is generally considered as an occasion of festivity and rejoicing. As the ceremony was performing, I observed many a rosy face among the country girls turn pale, and I did not see a smile throughout the church. The young ladies from the Hall were almost as much frightened as if it had been their own case, and stole many a look of sympathy at their trembling companion. A tear stood in the eye of the sensitive Lady Lillycraft: and as to Phœbe Wilkins, who was present, she absolutely wept and sobbed aloud; but it is hard to tell half the time what these fond, foolish creatures are crying about.

The captain, too, though naturally gay and unconcerned, was much agitated on the occasion, and, in attempting to put the ring upon the bride's finger, dropped it on the floor; which Lady Lillycraft has since assured me is a very lucky omen. Even Master Simon had lost his usual vivacity, and had assumed a most whimsically solemn face, which he is apt to do on all occasions of ceremony. He had much whispering with the parson and parish-clerk, for he is always a busy personage in the scene; and he echoed the clerk's amen with a solemnity and devotion that edified the whole assemblage.

The moment, however, that the ceremony was over, the transition was magical. The bride-cup was passed round, according to ancient usage, for the company to drink to a happy union; every one's feelings seemed to break forth from restraint; Master Simon had a world of bachelor pleasantries to utter, and as to the gallant general, he bowed and cooed about the dulcet Lady Lillycraft, like a mighty cock pigeon about his dame.

The villagers gathered in the churchyard to cheer the happy couple as they left the church; and the musical tailor had marshalled his band, and set up a hideous discord, as the blushing and smiling bride passed through a lane of honest peasantry to her carriage. The children shouted and threw up their hats; the bells rung a merry peal that set all the crows and rooks flying and cawing about the air, and threatened to bring down the battlements of the old tower; and there was a continual popping off of rusty firelocks from every part of the neighbourhood.

The prodigal son distinguished himself on the occasion, having hoisted a flag on the top of the school-house, and kept the village in a hubbub from sunrise with the sound of drum,

and fife, and pandean pipe; in which species of music several of his scholars are making wonderful proficiency. In his great zeal, however, he had nearly done mischief; for, on returning from church, the horses of the bride's carriage took fright from the discharge of a row of old gun-barrels, which he had mounted as a park of artillery in front of the school-house, to give the captain a military salute as he passed.

The day passed off with great rustic rejoicings. Tables were spread under the trees in the park, where all the peasantry of the neighbourhood were regaled with roast beef and plum-pudding, and oceans of ale. Ready-Money Jack presided at one of the tables, and became so full of good cheer, as to unbend from his usual gravity, to sing a song out of all tune, and give two or three shouts of laughter, that almost electrified his neighbours, like so many peals of thunder. The schoolmaster and the apothecary vied with each other in making speeches over their liquor; and there were occasional glees and musical performances by the village band, that must have frightened every faun and dryad from the park. Even old Christy, who had got on a new dress, from top to toe, and shone in all the splendour of bright leather breeches, and an enormous wedding favour in his cap, forgot his usual crustiness, became inspired by wine and wassail, and absolutely danced a hornpipe on one of the tables, with all the grace and agility of a mannikin hung upon wires.

Equal gaiety reigned within doors, where a large party of friends were entertained. Every one laughed at his own pleasantry, without attending to that of his neighbours. Loads of bride-cake was distributed. The young ladies were all busy in passing morsels of it through the wedding ring to dream on, and I myself assisted a fine little boarding-school girl in putting up a quantity for her companions, which I have no doubt will set all the little heads in the school gadding, for a week at least.

After dinner all the company, great and small, gentle and simple, abandoned themselves to the dance: not the modern quadrille, with its graceful gravity, but the merry, social, old country dance; the true dance, as the squire says, for a wedding occasion; as it sets all the world jigging in couples, hand in hand, and makes every eye and every heart dance merrily to the music. According to frank old usage, the gentle-folks of the Hall mingled, for a time, in the dance of the peasantry, who had a great tent erected for a ball-room; and

I think I never saw Master Simon more in his element than when figuring about among his rustic admirers, as master of the ceremonies; and, with a mingled air of protection and gallantry, leading out the quondam Queen of May—all blushing at the signal honour conferred upon her.

In the evening, the whole village was illuminated, excepting the house of the radical, who has not shown his face during the rejoicings. There was a display of fireworks at the school-house, got up by the prodigal son, which had wellnigh set fire to the building. The squire is so much pleased with the extraordinary services of this last-mentioned worthy, that he talks of enrolling him in his list of valuable retainers, and promoting him to some important post on the estate; peradventure to be falconer, if the hawks can ever be brought into proper training.

There is a well-known old proverb that says, "one wedding makes many"—or something to the same purpose; and I should not be surprised if it holds good in the present instance. I have seen several flirtations among the young people, that have been brought together on this occasion; and a great deal of strolling about in pairs, among the retired walks and blossoming shrubberies of the old garden; and if groves were really given to whispering, as poets would fain make us believe, Heaven knows what love-tales the grave-looking old trees about this venerable country-seat might blab to the world.

The general, too, has waxed very zealous in his devotions within the last few days, as the time of her ladyship's departure approaches. I observed him casting many a tender look at her during the wedding dinner, while the courses were changing; though he was always liable to be interrupted in his adoration by the appearance of any new delicacy. The general, in fact, has arrived at that time of life when the heart and the stomach maintain a kind of balance of power; and when a man is apt to be perplexed in his affections between a fine woman and a truffled turkey. Her ladyship was certainly rivalled through the whole of the first course by a dish of stewed carp; and there was one glance, which was evidently intended to be a point-blank shot at her heart, and could scarcely have failed to effect a practicable breach, had it not unluckily been diverted away to a tempting breast of lamb, in which it immediately produced a formidable incision.

Thus did the faithless general go on, coquetting during the

whole dinner, and committing an infidelity with every new dish; until, in the end, he was so overpowered by the attentions he had paid to fish, flesh, and fowl; to pastry, jelly, cream, and blancmange, that he seemed to sink within himself: his eyes swam beneath their lids, and their fire was so much slackened, that he could no longer discharge a single glance that would reach across the table. Upon the whole, I fear the general ate himself into as much disgrace, at this memorable dinner, as I have seen him sleep himself into on a former occasion.

I am told, moreover, that young Jack Tibbets was so touched by the wedding ceremony, at which he was present, and so captivated by the sensibility of poor Phœbe Wilkins, who certainly looked all the better for her tears, that he had a reconciliation with her that very day, after dinner, in one of the groves of the park, and danced with her in the evening; to the complete confusion of all Dame Tibbets' domestic politics. I met them walking together in the park, shortly after the reconciliation must have taken place. Young Jack carried himself gaily and manfully; but Phœbe hung her head, blushing, as I approached. However, just as she passed me, and dropped a curtsy, I caught a shy gleam of her eye from under her bonnet; but it was immediately cast down again. I saw enough in that single gleam, and in the involuntary smile that dimpled about her rosy lips, to feel satisfied that the little gipsy's heart was happy again.

What is more, Lady Lillycraft, with her usual benevolence and zeal in all matters of this tender nature, on hearing of the reconciliation of the lovers, undertook the critical task of breaking the matter to Ready-Money Jack. She thought there was no time like the present, and attacked the sturdy old yeoman that very evening in the park, while his heart was yet lifted up with the squire's good cheer. Jack was a little surprised at being drawn aside by her ladyship, but was not to be flurried by such an honour: he was still more surprised by the nature of her communication, and by this first intelligence of an affair that had been passing under his eye. He listened, however, with his usual gravity, as her ladyship represented the advantages of the match, the good qualities of the girl, and the distress which she had lately suffered; at length his eye began to kindle, and his hand to play with the head of his cudgel. Lady Lillycraft saw that something in the narrative had gone wrong, and hastened to

mollify his rising ire by reiterating the soft-hearted Phœbe's merit and fidelity, and her great unhappiness, when old Ready-Money suddenly interrupted her by exclaiming, that if Jack did not marry the wench, he'd break every bone in his body! The match, therefore, is considered a settled thing; Dame Tibbets and the housekeeper have made friends, and drank tea together; and Phœbe has again recovered her good looks and good spirits, and is carolling from morning till night like a lark.

But the most whimsical caprice of Cupid is one that I should be almost afraid to mention, did I not know that I was writing for readers well acquainted in the waywardness of this most mischievous deity. The morning after the wedding, therefore, while Lady Lillicraft was making preparations for her departure, an audience was requested by her immaculate handmaid, Mrs. Hannah, who, with much priming of the mouth, and many maidenly hesitations, requested leave to stay behind, and that Lady Lillicraft would supply her place with some other servant. Her ladyship was astonished: "What! Hannah going to quit her, that had lived with her so long!"

"Why, one could not help it; one must settle in life some time or other."

The good lady was still lost in amazement; at length the secret was gasped from the dry lips of the maiden gentlewoman: "she had been some time thinking of changing her condition, and at length had given her word, last evening, to Mr. Christy, the huntsman."

How, or when, or where this singular courtship had been carried on, I have not been able to learn; nor how she has been able, with the vinegar of her disposition, to soften the stony heart of old Nimrod; so, however, it is, and it has astonished every one. With all her ladyship's love of match-making, this last fume of Hymen's torch has been too much for her. She has endeavoured to reason with Mrs. Hannah, but all in vain; her mind was made up, and she grew tart on the least contradiction. Lady Lillicraft applied to the squire for his interference. "She did not know what she should do without Mrs. Hannah, she had been used to have her about her so long a time."

The squire, on the contrary, rejoiced in the match, as relieving the good lady from a kind of toilet-tyrant, under whose sway she had suffered for years. Instead of thwarting the affair, therefore, he has given it his full countenance; and declares

that he will set up the young couple in one of the best cottages on his estate. The approbation of the squire has been followed by that of the whole household: they all declare, that if ever matches are really made in heaven, this must have been; for that old Christy and Mrs. Hannah were as evidently formed to be linked together as ever were pepper-box and vinegar-cruet.

As soon as this matter was arranged, Lady Lillycraft took her leave of the family at the Hall; taking with her the captain and his blushing bride, who are to pass the honeymoon with her. Master Simon accompanied them on horseback, and indeed means to ride on ahead to make preparations. The general, who was fishing in vain for an invitation to her seat, handed her ladyship into her carriage with a heavy sigh; upon which his bosom friend, Master Simon, who was just mounting his horse, gave me a knowing wink, made an abominably wry face, and, leaning from his saddle, whispered loudly in my ear, "It won't do!" Then putting spurs to his horse, away he cantered off. The general stood for some time waving his hat after the carriage as it rolled down the avenue, until he was seized with a fit of sneezing, from exposing his head to the cool breeze. I observed that he returned rather thoughtfully to the house; whistling thoughtfully to himself, with his hands behind his back, and an exceedingly dubious air.

The company have now almost all taken their departure. I have determined to do the same to-morrow morning; and I hope my reader may not think that I have already lingered too long at the Hall. I have been tempted to do so, however, because I thought I had lit upon one of the retired places where there are yet some traces to be met with of old English character. A little while hence, and all these will probably have passed away. Ready-Money Jack will sleep with his fathers: the good squire, and all his peculiarities, will be buried in the neighbouring church. The old Hall will be modernised into a fashionable country-seat, or, peradventure, a manufactory. The park will be cut up into petty farms and kitchen-gardens. A daily coach will run through the village; it will become, like all other common-place villages, thronged with coachmen, post-boys, tipplers, and politicians; and Christmas, May-Day, and all the other hearty merry-makings of the "good old times" will be forgotten.

THE AUTHOR'S FAREWELL.

And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands, and part.

HAMLET.

HAVING taken leave of the Hall and its inmates, and brought the history of my visit to something like a close, there seems to remain nothing further than to make my bow and exit. It is my foible, however, to get on such companionable terms with my reader in the course of a work, that it really costs me some pain to part with him, and I am apt to keep him by the hand, and have a few farewell words at the end of my last volume.

When I cast an eye back upon the work I am just concluding, I cannot but be sensible how full it must be of errors and imperfections; indeed, how should it be otherwise, writing, as I do, about subjects and scenes with which, as a stranger, I am but partially acquainted? Many will, doubtless, find cause to smile at very obvious blunders which I may have made; and many may, perhaps, be offended at what they may conceive prejudiced representations. Some will think I might have said much more on such subjects as may suit their peculiar tastes; whilst others will think I had done wiser to have left those subjects entirely alone.

It will, probably, be said, too, by some, that I view England with a partial eye. Perhaps I do; for I can never forget that it is my "father-land." And yet the circumstances under which I have viewed it, have by no means been such as were calculated to produce favourable impressions. For the greater part of the time that I have resided in it, I have lived almost unknowing and unknown; seeking no favours, and receiving none; "a stranger and a sojourner in the land," and subject to all the chills and neglects that are the common lot of the stranger.

When I consider these circumstances, and recollect how often I have taken up my pen, with a mind ill at ease, and spirits much dejected and cast down, I cannot but think I was not likely to err on the favourable side of the picture. The opinions I have given of English character have been the result of much quiet, dispassionate, and varied observation. It is a character not to be hastily studied, for it always puts on a repulsive and ungracious aspect to a stranger. Let those, then, who condemn my representations as too favourable, observe this people as closely and deliberately as I have done, and they will, probably, change their opinion. Of one thing, at any rate, I am certain, that I have spoken honestly and sincerely, from the convictions of my mind, and the dictates of my heart. When I first published my former writings, it was with no hope of gaining favour in English eyes, for I little thought they were to become current out of my own country; and had I merely sought popularity among my own countrymen, I should have taken a more direct and obvious way,

by gratifying rather than rebuking the angry feelings that were then prevalent against England.

And here let me acknowledge my warm, my thankful feelings, for the manner in which one of my trivial lucubrations has been received. I allude to the essay in the Sketch-Book, on the subject of the literary feuds between England and America. I cannot express the heartfelt delight I have experienced at the unexpected sympathy and approbation with which those remarks have been received on both sides of the Atlantic. I speak not this from any paltry feelings of gratified vanity; for I attribute the effect to no merit of my pen. The paper in question was brief and casual, and the ideas it conveyed were simple and obvious. "It was the cause; it was the cause" alone. There was a predisposition on the part of my readers to be favourably affected. My countrymen responded in heart to the filial feelings I had avowed in their name towards the parent country: and there was a generous sympathy in every English bosom towards a solitary individual, lifting up his voice in a strange land, to vindicate the injured character of his nation. There are some causes so sacred as to carry with them an irresistible appeal to every virtuous bosom; and he needs but little power of eloquence, who defends the honour of his wife, his mother, or his country.

I hail, therefore, the success of that brief paper, as showing how much good may be done by a kind word, however feeble, when spoken in season—as showing how much dormant good feeling actually exists in each country towards the other, which only wants the slightest spark to kindle it into a genial flame—as showing, in fact, what I have all along believed and asserted, that the two nations would grow together in esteem and amity, if meddling and malignant spirits would but throw by their mischievous pens, and leave kindred hearts to the kindly impulses of nature.

I once more assert, and I assert it with increased conviction of its truth, that there exists, among the great majority of my countrymen, a favourable feeling towards England. I repeat this assertion, because I think it a truth that cannot too often be reiterated, and because it has met with some contradiction. Among all the liberal and enlightened minds of my countrymen, among all those which eventually give a tone to national opinion, there exists a cordial desire to be on terms of courtesy and friendship. But, at the same time, there exists in those very minds a distrust of reciprocal good will on the part of England. They have been rendered morbidly sensitive by the attacks made upon their country by the English press; and their occasional irritability on this subject has been misinterpreted into a settled and unnatural hostility.

For my part, I consider this jealous sensibility as belonging to generous natures. I should look upon my countrymen as fallen, indeed, from that independence of spirit which is their birth-gift;

as fallen, indeed, from that pride of character which they inherit from the proud nation from which they sprung, could they tamely sit down under the infliction of contumely and insult. Indeed, the very impatience which they show as to the misrepresentation of the press, proves their respect for English opinion, and their desire for English amity; for there is never jealousy where there is not strong regard.

It is easy to say that these attacks are all the effusions of worthless scribblers, and treated with silent contempt by the nation; but, alas! the slanders of the scribbler travel abroad, and the silent contempt of the nation is only known at home. With England, then, it remains, as I have formerly asserted, to promote a mutual spirit of conciliation: she has but to hold the language of friendship and respect, and she is secure of the good-will of every American bosom.

In expressing these sentiments, I would utter nothing that should commit the proper spirit of my countrymen. We seek no boon at England's hands: we ask nothing as a favour. Her friendship is not necessary, nor would her hostility be dangerous to our well-being. We ask nothing from abroad that we cannot reciprocate. But with respect to England, we have a warm feeling of the heart, the glow of consanguinity that still lingers in our blood. Interest apart—past differences forgotten—we extend the hand of old friendship. We merely ask, do not estrange us from you; do not destroy the ancient tie of blood; do not let scoffers and slanderers drive a kindred nation from your side: we would fain be friends: do not compel us to be enemies.

There needs no better rallying-ground for international amity, than that furnished by an eminent English writer:—"There is," says he, "a sacred bond between us of blood and of language, which no circumstances can break. Our literature must always be theirs; and, though their laws are no longer the same as ours, we have the same Bible, and we address our common Father in the same prayer. Nations are too ready to admit that they have natural enemies; why should they be less willing to believe that they have natural friends?"*

To the magnanimous spirits of both countries must we trust to carry such a natural alliance of affection into full effect. To pens more powerful than mine I leave the noble task of promoting the cause of national amity. To the intelligent and enlightened of my own country, I address my parting voice, entreating them to show themselves superior to the petty attacks of the ignorant and the worthless, and still to look with dispassionate and philosophic eye to the moral character of England, as the intellectual source of our rising greatness; while I appeal to every generous-minded Englishman from the slanders which disgrace

* From an article (said to be by Robert Southey, Esq.) published in the Quarterly Review. It is to be lamented that that publication should so often forget the generous text here given!

the press, insult the understanding, and belie the magnanimity of his country: and I invite him to look to America, as to a kindred nation, worthy of its origin; giving, in the healthy vigour of its growth, the best of comments on its parent stock; and reflecting, in the dawning brightness of its fame, the moral effulgence of British glory.

I am sure that such appeal will not be made in vain. Indeed I have noticed, for some time past, an essential change in English sentiment with regard to America. In Parliament, that fountain-head of public opinion, there seems to be an emulation, on both sides of the house, in holding the language of courtesy and friendship. The same spirit is daily becoming more and more prevalent in good society. There is a growing curiosity concerning my country; a craving desire for correct information, that cannot fail to lead to a favourable understanding. The scoffer, I trust, has had his day: the time of the slanderer has gone by. The ribald jokes, the stale common-places, which had so long passed current when America was the theme, are now banished to the ignorant and the vulgar, or only perpetuated by the hireling scribblers and traditional jesters of the press. The intelligent and high-minded now pride themselves upon making America a study.

But however my feelings may be understood or reciprocated on either side of the Atlantic, I utter them without reserve, for I have ever found that to speak frankly is to speak safely. I am not so sanguine as to believe that the two nations are ever to be bound together by any romantic ties of feeling; but I believe that much may be done towards keeping alive cordial sentiments, were every well-disposed mind occasionally to throw in a simple word of kindness. If I have, indeed, contributed in any degree to produce such an effect by my writings, it will be a soothing reflection to me, that for once, in the course of a rather negligent life, I have been useful; that for once, by the casual exercise of a pen which has been in general but too unprofitably employed, I have awakened a chord of sympathy between the land of my fathers and the dear land that gave me birth.

In the spirit of these sentiments, I now take my farewell of the paternal soil. With anxious eye do I behold the clouds of doubt and difficulty that are lowering over it, and earnestly do I hope that they may all clear up into serene and settled sunshine. In bidding this last adieu, my heart is filled with fond, yet melancholy emotions; and still I linger, and still, like a child, leaving the venerable abodes of his forefathers, I turn to breathe forth a filial benediction: "Peace be within thy walls, O England! and plenteousness within thy palaces; for my brethren and my companions' sake I will now say, Peace be within thee!"

THE END.

ABBOTSFORD,
AND
NEWSTEAD ABBEY.

BY
WASHINGTON IRVING.

With an Appendix,
PECULIAR TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

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ABBOTSFORD.

I sit down to perform my promise of giving you an account of a visit made many years since to Abbotsford. I hope, however, that you do not expect much from me, for the travelling notes taken at the time are so scanty and vague, and my memory so extremely fallacious, that I fear I shall disappoint you with the meagreness and crudeness of my details.

Late in the evening of the 29th of August, 1817, I arrived at the ancient little border town of Selkirk, where I put up for the night. I had come down from Edinburgh, partly to visit Melrose Abbey and its vicinity, but chiefly to get a sight of the "mighty Minstrel of the North." I had a letter of introduction to him from Thomas Campbell the poet, and had reason to think, from the interest he had taken in some of my earlier scribblings, that a visit from me would not be deemed an intrusion.

On the following morning, after an early breakfast, I set off in a postchaise for the Abbey. On the way thither I stopped at the gate of Abbotsford, and sent the postilion to the house with the letter of introduction and my card, on which I had written that I was on my way to the ruins of Melrose Abbey, and wished to know whether it would be agreeable to Mr. Scott (he had not yet been made a Baronet) to receive a visit from me in the course of the morning.

While the postilion was on his errand; I had time to survey the mansion. It stood some short distance below the road, on the side of a hill sweeping down to the Tweed; and was as yet but a snug gentleman's cottage, with something rural and picturesque in its appearance. The whole front was overrun with evergreens, and immediately above the portal was a great pair of elk horns, branching out from beneath the foliage, and giving the cottage the look of a hunting-lodge. The huge baronial pile, to which this modest mansion in a manner gave birth, was just emerging into existence: part of

the walls, surrounded by scaffolding, already had risen to the height of the cottage, and the court-yard in front was encumbered by masses of hewn stone.

The noise of the chaise had disturbed the quiet of the establishment. Out sallied the warder of the castle, a black greyhound, and, leaping on one of the blocks of stone, began a furious barking. His alarum brought out the whole garrison of dogs:

"Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree;"

all open-mouthed and vociferous — I should correct my quotation;—not a cur was to be seen on the premises: Scott was too true a sportsman, and had too high a veneration for pure blood, to tolerate a mongrel.

In a little while the "lord of the castle" himself made his appearance. I knew him at once by the descriptions I had read and heard, and the likenesses that had been published of him. He was tall, and of a large and powerful frame. His dress was simple, and almost rustic. An old green shooting-coat, with a dog-whistle at the buttonhole, brown linen pantaloons, stout shoes that tied at the ankles, and a white hat that had evidently seen service. He came limping up the gravel walk, aiding himself by a stout walking-staff, but moving rapidly and with vigour. By his side jogged along a large iron-grey staghound of most grave demeanour, who took no part in the clamour of the canine rabble, but seemed to consider himself bound, for the dignity of the house, to give me a courteous reception.

Before Scott had reached the gate he called out in a hearty tone, welcoming me to Abbotsford, and asking news of Campbell. Arrived at the door of the chaise, he grasped me warmly by the hand: "Come, drive down, drive down to the house," said he; "ye're just in time for breakfast, and afterwards ye shall see all the wonders of the Abbey."

I would have excused myself, on the plea of having already made my breakfast. "Hout, man," cried he, "a ride in the morning in the keen air of the Scotch hills is warrant enough for a second breakfast."

I was accordingly whirled to the portal of the cottage, and in a few moments found myself seated at the breakfast-table

There was no one present but the family, which consisted of Mrs. Scott, her eldest daughter Sophia, then a fine girl about seventeen, Miss Ann Scott, two or three years younger, Walter, a well-grown stripling, and Charles, a lively boy, eleven or twelve years of age. I soon felt myself quite at home, and my heart in a glow with the cordial welcome I experienced. I had thought to make a mere morning visit, but found I was not to be let off so lightly. "You must not think our neighbourhood is to be read in a morning, like a newspaper," said Scott. "It takes several days of study for an observant traveller that has a relish for auld world trumpery. After breakfast you shall make your visit to Melrose Abbey. I shall not be able to accompany you, as I have some household affairs to attend to, but I will put you in charge of my son Charles, who is very learned in all things touching the old ruin and the neighbourhood it stands in, and he and my friend Johnny Bower will tell you the whole truth about it, with a good deal more that you are not called upon to believe—unless you be a true and nothing-doubting antiquary. When you come back, I'll take you out on a ramble about the neighbourhood. To-morrow we will take a look at the Yarrow, and the next day we will drive over to Dryburgh Abbey, which is a fine old ruin well worth your seeing"—in a word, before Scott had got through with his plan, I found myself committed for a visit of several days, and it seemed as if a little realm of romance was suddenly opened before me.

After breakfast I accordingly set off for the Abbey with my little friend Charles, whom I found a most sprightly and entertaining companion. He had an ample stock of anecdote about the neighbourhood, which he had learned from his father, and many quaint remarks and sly jokes, evidently derived from the same source, all which were uttered with a Scottish accent and a mixture of Scottish phraseology that gave them additional flavour.

On our way to the Abbey he gave me some anecdotes of Johnny Bower, to whom his father had alluded; he was sexton of the parish and custodian of the ruin, employed to keep it in order and show it to strangers;—a worthy little man, not

without ambition in his humble sphere. The death of his predecessor had been mentioned in the newspapers, so that his name had appeared in print throughout the land. When Johnny succeeded to the guardianship of the ruin, he stipulated that, on his death, his name should receive like honourable blazon; with this addition, that it should be from the pen of Scott. The latter gravely pledged himself to pay this tribute to his memory, and Johnny now lived in the proud anticipation of a poetic immortality.

I found Johnny Bower a decent-looking little old man, in blue coat and red waistcoat. He received us with much greeting, and seemed delighted to see my young companion, who was full of merriment and waggery, drawing out his peculiarities for my amusement. The old man was one of the most authentic and particular of cicerones; he pointed out every thing in the Abbey that had been described by Scott in his "Lay of the Last Minstrel;" and would repeat, with broad Scottish accent, the passage which celebrated it.

Thus, in passing through the cloisters, he made me remark the beautiful carvings of leaves and flowers wrought in stone with the most exquisite delicacy, and, notwithstanding the lapse of centuries, retaining their sharpness as if fresh from the chisel; rivalling, as Scott has said, the real objects of which they were imitations:

"Nor herb nor flowret glistened there
But was carved in the cloister arches as fair."

He pointed out also among the carved work a nun's head of much beauty, which he said Scott always stopped to admire—"for the shirra had a wonderfu' eye for all sic matters."

I would observe, that Scott seemed to derive more consequence in the neighbourhood from being sheriff of the county than from being poet.

In the interior of the Abbey, Johnny Bower conducted me to the identical stone on which Stout William of Deloraine and the Monk took their seat on that memorable night when the wizard's book was to be rescued from the grave. Nay, Johnny had even gone beyond Scott in the minuteness of his antiquarian research, for he had discovered the very tomb of the wizard, the position of which had been left in doubt by

the poet. This he boasted to have ascertained by the position of the Oriel window, and the direction in which the moonbeams fell at night, through the stained glass, casting the shadow to the red cross on the spot; as had all been specified in the poem. "I pointed out the whole to the shirra," said he, "and he could na gainsay but it was varra clear." I found afterwards, that Scott used to amuse himself with the simplicity of the old man, and his zeal in verifying every passage of the poem, as though it had been authentic history, and that he always acquiesced in his deductions. I subjoin the description of the wizard's grave, which called forth the antiquarian research of Johnny Bower:—

"Lo, warrior! now the cross of red,
Points to the grave of the mighty dead.
Slow moved the monk to the broad flag-stone,
Which the bloody cross was traced upon:
He pointed to a sacred nook:
An iron bar the warrior took;
And the monk made a sign with his withered hand,
The grave's huge portal to expand.

It was by dint of passing strength
That he moved the massy stone at length.
I would you had been there, to see
How the light broke forth so gloriously,
Streamed upward to the chancel roof,
And through the galleries far aloof!

And, issuing from the tomo,
Showed the monk's cowl and visage pale,
Danced on the dark brown warrior's mail,
And kissed his waving plume.

Before their eyes the wizard lay,
As if he had not been dead a day.
His hoary beard in silver rolled,
He seemed some seventy winters old;
A palmer's amice wrapped him round;
With a wrought Spanish baldric bound,
Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea;
His left hand held his book of might;
A silver cross was in his right:

The lamp was placed beside his knee."

The fictions of Scott had become facts with honest Johnny Bower. From constantly living among the ruins of Melrose Abbey, and pointing out the scenes of the poem, the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" had, in a manner, become interwoven with

his whole existence, and I doubt whether he did not now and then mix up his own identity with the personages of some of its cantos.

He could not bear that any other production of the poet should be preferred to the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." "Faith," said he to me, "it's just e'en as gude a thing as Mr. Scott has written; an' if he were stannin' there I'd tell him so—an' then he'd lauff."

He was loud in his praises of the affability of Scott. "He'll come here sometimes," said he, "with great folks in his company, and the first I know of it is his voice, calling out Johnny!—Johnny Bower!—and when I go out, I am sure to be greeted with a joke or a pleasant word. He'll stand and crack and lauff wi' me, just like an auld wife; and to think that of a man that has such an awfu' knowledge o' history!"

One of the ingenious devices on which the worthy little man prided himself, was to place a visitor opposite to the Abbey, with his back to it, and bid him bend down and look at it between his legs. This, he said, gave an entirely different aspect to the ruin. Folks admired the plan amazingly, but as to the "leddies," they were dainty on the matter, and contented themselves with looking from under their arms.

As Johnny Bower piqued himself upon showing every thing laid down in the poem, there was one passage that perplexed him sadly. It was the opening of one of the cantos:

"If thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild but to flout the ruins gray," &c.

In consequence of this admonition, many of the most devout pilgrims to the ruin could not be contented with a daylight inspection, and insisted it could be nothing unless seen by the light of the moon. Now, unfortunately, the moon shines but for a part of the month; and what is still more unfortunate, is very apt in Scotland to be obscured by clouds and mists. Johnny was sorely puzzled, therefore, how to accommodate his poetry-struck visitors with this indispensable moonshine. At length, in a lucky moment, he devised a

substitute. This was a great double tallow candle stuck upon the end of a pole, with which he could conduct his visitors about the ruins on dark nights, so much to their satisfaction that, at length, he began to think it even preferable to the moon itself. "It does na light up a' the Abbey at aince, to be sure," he would say, "but then you can shift it about and show the auld ruin bit by bit, whiles the moon only shines on one side."

Honest Johnny Bower! so many years have elapsed since the time I treat of, that it is more than probable his simple head lies beneath the walls of his favourite Abbey. It is to be hoped his humble ambition has been gratified, and his name recorded by the pen of the man he so loved and honoured.

After my return from Melrose Abbey, Scott proposed a ramble to show me something of the surrounding country. As we sallied forth, every dog in the establishment turned out to attend us. There was the old staghound Maida, that I have already mentioned, a noble animal, and a great favourite of Scott's; and Hamlet, the black greyhound, a wild thoughtless youngster, not yet arrived to years of discretion; and Finette, a beautiful setter, with soft silken hair, long pendent ears, and a mild eye—the parlour favourite. When in front of the house, we were joined by a superannuated greyhound, who came from the kitchen wagging his tail, and was cheered by Scott as an old friend and comrade.

In our walks, Scott would frequently pause in conversation to notice his dogs and speak to them, as if rational companions; and indeed there appears to be a vast deal of rationality in these faithful attendants on man, derived from their close intimacy with him. Maida deported himself with a gravity becoming his age and size, and seemed to consider himself called upon to preserve a great degree of dignity and decorum in our society. As he jogged along a little distance a-head of us, the young dogs would gambol about him, leap on his neck, worry at his ears, and endeavour to tease him into a frolic. The old dog would keep on for a long time with imperturbable solemnity, now and then seeming to rebuke the wantonness of his young companions. At length he

would make a sudden turn, seize one of them, and tumble him in the dust; then giving a glance at us, as much as to say, "You see, gentlemen, I can't help giving way to this nonsense," would resume his gravity and jog on as before.

Scott amused himself with these peculiarities. "I make no doubt," said he, "when Maida is alone with these young dogs, he throws gravity aside, and plays the boy as much as any of them; but he is ashamed to do so in our company, and seems to say, 'Ha' done with your nonsense, youngsters; what will the laird and that other gentleman think of me if I give way to such foolery?'"

Maida reminded him, he said, of a scene on board an armed yacht in which he made an excursion with his friend Adam Ferguson. They had taken much notice of the boat-swain, who was a fine sturdy seaman, and evidently felt flattered by their attention. On one occasion the crew were "piped to fun," and the sailors were dancing and cutting all kinds of capers to the music of the ship's band. The boat-swain looked on with a wistful eye, as if he would like to join in; but a glance at Scott and Ferguson showed that there was a struggle with his dignity, fearing to lessen himself in their eyes. At length one of his messmates came up, and seizing him by the arm, challenged him to a jig. The boat-swain, continued Scott, after a little hesitation complied, made an awkward gambol or two, like our friend Maida, but soon gave it up. "It's of no use," said he, jerking up his waistband and giving a side glance at us, "one can't dance always, nouthur."

Scott amused himself with the peculiarities of another of his dogs, a little shamefaced terrier, with large glassy eyes, one of the most sensitive little bodies to insult and indignity in the world. If ever he whipped him, he said, the little fellow would sneak off and hide himself from the light of day, in a lumber garret, whence there was no drawing him forth but by the sound of the chopping-knife, as if chopping up his victuals, when he would steal forth with humbled and down-cast look, but would skulk away again if any one regarded him.

While we were discussing the humours and peculiarities of our canine companions, some object provoked their spleen,

and produced a sharp and petulant barking from the smaller fry, but it was sometime before Maida was sufficiently aroused to ramp forward two or three bounds and join in the chorus, with a deep-mouthed bow-wow!

It was but a transient outbreak, and he returned instantly, wagging his tail, and looking up dubiously in his master's face, uncertain whether he would censure or applaud.

"Aye, aye, old boy!" cried Scott, "you have done wonders. You have shaken the Eildon hills with your roaring; you may now lay by your artillery for the rest of the day. Maida is like the great gun at Constantinople," continued he; "it takes so long to get it ready, that the small guns can fire off a dozen times first, but when it does go off it plays the very d—l."

These simple anecdotes may serve to show the delightful play of Scott's humours and feelings in private life. His domestic animals were his friends; everything about him seemed to rejoice in the light of his countenance: the face of the humblest dependant brightened at his approach, as if he anticipated a cordial and cheering word. I had occasion to observe this particularly in a visit which we paid to a quarry, whence several men were cutting stone for the new edifice; who all paused from their labour to have a pleasant "crack wi' the laird." One of them was a burghess of Selkirk, with whom Scott had some joke about the old song:

"Up with the Souters o' Selkirk,
And down with the Earl of Home."

Another was precentor at the kirk, and, beside leading the psalmody on Sunday, taught the lads and lasses of the neighbourhood dancing on week-days, in the winter time, when out-of-door labour was scarce.

Among the rest was a tall, straight old fellow, with a healthful complexion and silver hair, and a small round-crowned white hat. He had been about to shoulder a hod, but paused, and stood looking at Scott, with a slight sparkling of his blue eye, as if waiting his turn; for the old fellow knew himself to be a favourite.

Scott accosted him in an affable tone, and asked for a pinch of snuff. The old man drew forth a horn snuff-box. "Hoot, man," said Scott, "not that old mull: where's the

bonnie French one that I brought you from Paris?" "Troth, your honour," replied the old fellow, "sic a mull as that is nae for week-days."

On leaving the quarry, Scott informed me that, when absent at Paris, he had purchased several trifling articles as presents for his dependants, and among others, the gay snuff-box in question, which was so carefully reserved for Sundays by the veteran. "It was not so much the value of the gifts," said he, "that pleased them, as the idea that the laird should think of them when so far away."

The old man in question, I found, was a great favourite with Scott. If I recollect right, he had been a soldier in early life, and his straight, erect person, his ruddy yet rugged countenance, his grey hair, and an arch gleam in his blue eye, reminded me of the description of Edie Ochiltree. I find that the old fellow has since been introduced by Wilkie, in his picture of the Scott family.

We rambled on among scenes which had been familiar in Scottish song, and rendered classic by the pastoral muse, long before Scott had thrown the rich mantle of his poetry over them. What a thrill of pleasure did I feel when first I saw the broom-covered tops of the Cowden Knowes, peeping above the grey hills of the Tweed: and what touching associations were called up by the sight of Ettrick Vale, Galla Water, and the Braes of Yarrow! Every turn brought to mind some household air—some almost forgotten song of the nursery, by which I had been lulled to sleep in my childhood; and with them the looks and voices of those who had sung them, and who were now no more. It is these melodies, chanted in our ears in the days of infancy, and connected with the memory of those we have loved, and who have passed away, that clothe Scottish landscape with such tender associations. The Scottish songs, in general, have something intrinsically melancholy in them; owing, in all probability, to the pastoral and lonely life of those who composed them; who were often mere shepherds, tending their flocks in the solitary glens, or folding them among the naked hills. Many of these rustic bards have passed away, without leaving a name behind them; nothing remains of them but their sweet and touching

songs, which live, like echoes, about the places they once inhabited. Most of these simple effusions of pastoral poets are linked with some favourite haunt of the poet; and in this way, not a mountain or valley, a town or tower, green shaw or running stream, in Scotland, but has some popular air connected with it, that makes its very name a key-note to a whole train of delicious fancies and feelings.

Let me step forward in time, and mention how sensible I was to the power of these simple airs, in a visit which I made to Ayr, the birthplace of Robert Burns. I passed a whole morning about "the banks and braes of bonnie Doon," with his tender little love-verses running in my head. I found a poor Scotch carpenter at work among the ruins of Kirk Allo-way, which was to be converted into a school-house. Finding the purpose of my visit, he left his work, sat down with me on a grassy grave, close by where Burns' father was buried, and talked of the poet, whom he had known personally. He said his songs were familiar to the poorest and most illiterate of the country folk, "*and it seemed to him as if the country had grown more beautiful, since Burns had written his bonnie little songs about it.*"

I found Scott was quite an enthusiast on the subject of the popular songs of his country, and he seemed gratified to find me so alive to them. Their effect in calling up in my mind the recollections of early times and scenes in which I had first heard them, reminded him, he said, of the lines of his poor friend, Leyden, to the Scottish muse:

"In youth's first morn, alert and gay,
Ere rolling years had passed away,
Remembered like a morning dream,
I heard the dulcet measures float,
In many a liquid winding note,
Along the bank of Teviot's stream.

Sweet sounds! that oft have soothed to rest
The sorrows of my guileless breast,
And charmed away mine infant tears;
Fond memory shall your strains repeat,
Like distant echoes doubly sweet,
That on the wild the traveller hears."

Scott went on to expatiate on the popular songs of Scotland. "They are a part of our national inheritance," said

he, "and something that we may truly call our own. They have no foreign taint; they have the pure breath of the heather and the mountain breeze. All the genuine legitimate races that have descended from the ancient Britons, such as the Scotch, the Welsh, and the Irish, have national airs. The English have none, because they are not natives of the soil, or, at least, are mongrels. Their music is all made up of foreign scraps, like a harlequin jacket, or a piece of mosaic. Even in Scotland we have comparatively few national songs in the eastern part, where we have had most influx of strangers. A real old Scottish song is a cairn gorm—a gem of our own mountains: or rather, it is a precious relic of old times, that bears the national character stamped upon it;—like a cameo, that shows what the national visage was in former days, before the breed was crossed."

While Scott was thus discoursing, we were passing up a narrow glen, with the dogs beating about, to right and left, when suddenly a black cock burst upon the wing.

"Aha!" cried Scott, "there will be a good shot for master Walter; we must send him this way with his gun, when we go home. Walter's the family sportsman now, and keeps us in game. I have pretty nigh resigned my gun to him; for I find I cannot trudge about as briskly as formerly."

Our ramble took us on the hills commanding an extensive prospect. "Now," said Scott, "I have brought you, like the pilgrim in the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' to the top of the Delectable Mountains, that I may show you all the goodly regions hereabouts. Yonder is Lammermuir, and Smalholme; and there you have Gallashiels, and Torwoodlie, and Gallawater; and in that direction you see Teviotdale, and the Braes of Yarrow; and Ettrick stream, winding along, like a silver thread, to throw itself into the Tweed."

He went on thus to call over names celebrated in Scottish song, and most of which had recently received a romantic interest from his own pen. In fact, I saw a great part of the border country spread out before me, and could trace the scenes of those poems and romances which had, in a manner, bewitched the world. I gazed about me for a time with mute surprise, I may almost say with disappointment. I beheld a mere succession of grey waving hills, line beyond line, as far

as my eye could reach; monotonous in their aspect, and so destitute of trees, that one could almost see a stout fly walking along their profile; and the far-famed Tweed appeared a naked stream, flowing between bare hills, without a tree or thicket on its banks; and yet, such had been the magic web of poetry and romance thrown over the whole, that it had a greater charm for me than the richest scenery I beheld in England.

I could not help giving utterance to my thoughts. Scott hummed for a moment to himself, and looked grave; he had no idea of having his muse complimented at the expense of his native hills. "It may be partiality," said he, at length; "but to my eye, these grey hills and all this wild border country have beauties peculiar to themselves. I like the very nakedness of the land; it has something bold, and stern, and solitary about it. When I have been for sometime in the rich scenery about Edinburgh, which is like ornamented garden land, I begin to wish myself back again among my honest grey hills; and if I did not see the heather at least once a year, *I think I should die!*"

The last words were said with an honest warmth, accompanied with a thump on the ground with his staff, by way of emphasis, that showed his heart was in his speech. He vindicated the Tweed, too, as a beautiful stream in itself, and observed that he did not dislike it for being bare of trees, probably from having been much of an angler in his time; and an angler does not like to have a stream overhung by trees, which embarrass him in the exercise of his rod and line.

I took occasion to plead, in like manner, the associations of early life for my disappointment in respect to the surrounding scenery. I had been so accustomed to hills crowned with forests, and streams breaking their way through a wilderness of trees, that all my ideas of romantic landscape were apt to be well wooded.

"Aye, and that's the great charm of your country," cried Scott. "You love the forest as I do the heather; but I would not have you think I do not feel the glory of a great woodland prospect. There is nothing I should like more than to be in the midst of one of your grand, wild, original forests; with the idea of hundreds of miles of untrodden forest around

me. I once saw, at Leith, an immense stick of timber, just landed from America. It must have been an enormous tree when it stood on its native soil, at its full height, and with all its branches. I gazed at it with admiration; it seemed like one of the gigantic obelisks which are now and then brought from Egypt, to shame the pigmy monuments of Europe; and, in fact, these vast aboriginal trees, that have sheltered the Indians before the intrusion of the white men, are the monuments and antiquities of your country."

The conversation here turned upon Campbell's poem of "Gertrude of Wyoming," as illustrative of the poetic materials furnished by American scenery. Scott spoke of it in that liberal style in which I always found him to speak of the writings of his contemporaries. He cited several passages of it with great delight. "What a pity it is," said he, "that Campbell does not write more and oftener, and give full sweep to his genius. He has wings that would bear him to the skies; and he does now and then spread them grandly, but folds them up again and resumes his perch, as if he was afraid to launch away. He don't know or won't trust his own strength. Even when he has done a thing well, he has often misgivings about it. He left out several fine passages of his 'Lochiel,' but I got him to restore some of them." Here Scott repeated several passages in a magnificent style. "What a grand idea is that," said he, "about prophetic boding, or, in common parlance, second sight—

•
'Coming events cast their shadows before.'

It is a noble thought, and nobly expressed. And there's that glorious little poem, too, of 'Hohenlinden;' after he had written it, he did not seem to think much of it, but considered some of it 'd—d drum-and-trumpet lines.' I got him to recite it to me, and I believe that the delight I felt and expressed had an effect in inducing him to print it. The fact is," added he, "Campbell is, in a manner, a bugbear to himself. The brightness of his early success is a detriment to all his further efforts. *He is afraid of the shadow that his own fame casts before him.*"

While we were thus chatting, we heard the report of a gun among the hills. "That's Walter, I think," said Scott; "he

has finished his morning's studies, and is out with his gun. I should not be surprised if he had met with the black-cock; if so, we shall have an addition to our larder, for Walter is a pretty sure shot."

I inquired into the nature of Walter's studies. "Faith," said Scott, "I can't say much on that head. I am not over-bent upon making prodigies of any of my children. As to Walter, I taught him, while a boy, to ride, and shoot, and speak the truth; as to the other parts of his education, I leave them to a very worthy young man, the son of one of our clergymen, who instructs all my children."

I afterwards became acquainted with the young man in question, George Thomson, son of the minister of Melrose, and found him possessed of much learning, intelligence, and modest worth. He used to come every day from his father's residence at Melrose to superintend the studies of the young folks, and occasionally took his meals at Abbotsford, where he was highly esteemed. Nature had cut him out, Scott used to say, for a stalwart soldier, for he was tall, vigorous, active, and fond of athletic exercises, but accident had marred her work, the loss of a limb in boyhood having reduced him to a wooden leg. He was brought up, therefore, for the church, whence he was occasionally called the Dominie, and is supposed, by his mixture of learning, simplicity, and amiable eccentricity, to have furnished many traits for the character of Dominie Sampson. I believe he had often acted as Scott's amanuensis, when composing his novels. With him the young people were occupied, in general, during the early part of the day, after which they took all kinds of healthful recreations in the open air; for Scott was as solicitous to strengthen their bodies as their minds.

We had not walked much further before we saw the two Misses Scott advancing along the hill-side to meet us. The morning's studies being over, they had set off to take a ramble on the hills, and gather heather blossoms with which to decorate their hair for dinner. As they came bounding lightly like young fawns, and their dresses fluttering in the pure summer breeze, I was reminded of Scott's own description of his children in his introduction to one of the cantos of "Marmion":—

"My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,
As best befits the mountain child,
Their summer gambols tell and mourn,
And anxious ask, Will spring return,
And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?

Yes, prattlers, yes, the daisy's flower
Again shall paint your summer bower;
Again the hawthorn shall supply
The garlands you delight to tie;
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
The wild birds carol to the round;
And while you frolic light as they,
Too short shall seem the summer day."

As they approached, the dogs all sprang forward and gambolled around them. They played with them for a time, and then joined us with countenances full of health and glee. Sophia, the eldest, was the most lively and joyous, having much of her father's varied spirit in conversation, and seeming to catch excitement from his words and looks. Ann was of quieter mood, rather silent; owing, in some measure, no doubt, to her being some years younger.

At dinner Scott had laid by his half-rustic dress, and appeared clad in black. The girls, too, in completing their toilet, had twisted in their hair the sprigs of purple heather which they had gathered on the hill-side, and looked all fresh and blooming from their breezy walk.

There was no guest at dinner but myself. Around the table were two or three dogs in attendance. Maida, the old staghound, took his seat at Scott's elbow, looking up wistfully in his master's eye; while Finette, the pet spaniel, placed herself near Mrs. Scott, by whom, I soon perceived, she was completely spoiled.

The conversation happening to turn on the merits of his dogs, Scott spoke with great feeling and affection of his favourite, Camp, who is depicted by his side in the earlier engravings of him. He talked of him as of a real friend whom he had lost, and Sophia Scott, looking up archly in his face, observed that papa shed a few tears when poor Camp died. I may here mention another testimonial of Scott's fondness for his dogs, and his humorous mode of showing it,

which I subsequently met with. Rambling with him one morning about the grounds adjacent to the house, I observed a small antique monument, on which was inscribed, in Gothic characters—

“Ce-gît le preux Percy.”

(Here lies the brave Percy.)

I paused, supposing it to be the tomb of some stark warrior of the olden time; but Scott drew me on. “Pooh!” cried he, “it’s nothing but one of the monuments of my non sense, of which you’ll find enough hereabouts.” I learnt afterwards that it was the grave of a favourite greyhound.

Among the other important and privileged members of the household who figured in attendance at the dinner was a large grey cat, who, I observed, was regaled from time to time with tit-bits from the table. This sage grimalkin was a favourite of both master and mistress, and slept at night in their room, and Scott laughingly observed, that one of the least wise parts of their establishment was, that the window was left open at night for puss to go in and out. The cat assumed a kind of ascendancy among the quadrupeds—sitting in state in Scott’s arm-chair, and occasionally stationing himself on a chair beside the door, as if to review his subjects as they passed, giving each dog a cuff beside the ears as he went by. This clapper-clawing was always taken in good part; it appeared to be, in fact, a mere act of sovereignty on the part of grimalkin, to remind the others of their vassalage; which they acknowledged by the most perfect acquiescence. A general harmony prevailed between sovereign and subjects, and they would all sleep together in the sunshine.

Scott was full of anecdote and conversation during dinner. He made some admirable remarks upon the Scottish character, and spoke strongly in praise of the quiet, orderly, honest conduct of his neighbours, which one would hardly expect, said he, from the descendants of moss-troopers and borderers, in a neighbourhood famed in old times for brawl and feud, and violence of all kinds. He said he had, in his official capacity of sheriff, administered the laws for a number of years, during which there had been very few trials. The old feuds, and local interests, and rivalries and animosities of the Scotch, however, still slept, he said, in their ashes, and might easily be roused.

Their hereditary feeling for names was still great. It was not always safe to have even the game of football between villages, the old clannish spirit was too apt to break out. The Scotch, he said, were more revengeful than the English; they carried their resentments longer, and would sometimes lay them by for years, but would be sure to gratify them in the end.

The ancient jealousy between the Highlanders and the Lowlanders still continued to a certain degree, the former looking upon the latter as an inferior race, less brave and hardy, but at the same time suspecting them of a disposition to take airs upon themselves under the idea of superior refinement. This made them techy and ticklish company for a stranger on his first coming among them; ruffling up and putting themselves upon their mettle on the slightest occasion, so that he had in a manner to quarrel and fight his way into their good graces.

He instanced a case in point in a brother of Mungo Park, who went to take up his residence in a wild neighbourhood of the Highlands. He soon found himself considered as an intruder, and that there was a disposition among these cocks of the hills to fix a quarrel on him, trusting that, being a Lowlander, he would show the white feather.

For a time, he bore their flings and taunts with great coolness, until one, presuming on his forbearance, drew forth a dirk, and, holding it before him, asked him if he had ever seen a weapon like that in his part of the country. Park, who was a Hercules in frame, seized the dirk, and with one blow drove it through an oaken table:—"Yes," replied he; "and tell your friends that a man from the Lowlands drove it where the devil himself cannot draw it out again." All persons were delighted with the feat, and the words that accompanied it. They drank with Park to a better acquaintance, and were stanch friends ever afterwards.

After dinner we adjourned to the drawing-room, which served also for study and library. Against the wall on one side was a long writing-table, with drawers, surmounted by a small cabinet of polished wood, with folding-doors richly studded with brass ornaments, within which Scott kept his most valuable papers. Above the cabinet, in a kind of niche,

was a complete corslet of glittering steel, with a closed helmet, and flanked by gauntlets and battleaxes. Around were hung trophies and relics of various kinds: a cimeter of Tippoo Saib; a Highland broadsword from Flodden Field; a pair of Rippon spurs from Bannockburn; and, above all, a gun which had belonged to Rob Roy, and bore his initials, R. M. G.,—an object of peculiar interest to me at the time, as it was understood Scott was actually engaged in printing a novel founded on the story of that famous outlaw.

On each side of the cabinet were bookcases, well stored with works of romantic fiction in various languages, many of them rare and antiquated. This, however, was merely his cottage library, the principal part of his books being at Edinburgh.

From this little cabinet of curiosities Scott drew forth a manuscript picked up on the field of Waterloo, containing copies of several songs popular at the time in France. The paper was dabbled with blood—"the very life-blood, very possibly," said Scott, "of some gay young officer, who had cherished these songs as a keepsake from some lady-love in Paris."

He adverted in a mellow and delightful manner to the little half gay, half-melancholy campaigning song, said to have been composed by General Wolfe, and sung by him at the mess-table on the eve of the storming of Quebec, in which he fell so gloriously:—

"Why, soldiers, why
Should we be melancholy, boys?
Why, soldiers, why,
Whose business 'tis to die?
For should next campaign
Send us to Him who made us, boys,
We're free from pain;
But should we remain,
A bottle and kind landlady
Makes all well again."

"So," added he, "the poor lad who fell at Waterloo, in all probability, had been singing these songs in his tent the night before the battle, and thinking of the fair dame who had taught him them, and promising himself, should he outlive the campaign, to return to her all glorious from the wars."

I find since that Scott published translations of these songs among some of his smaller poems.

The evening passed away delightfully in this quaint-looking apartment, half study, half drawing-room. Scott read several passages from the old romance of Arthur, with a fine, deep, sonorous voice, and a gravity of tone that seemed to suit the antiquated, black-letter volume. It was a rich treat to hear such a work read by such a person, and in such a place; and his appearance, as he sat reading in a large armed-chair, with his favourite hound Maida at his feet, and surrounded by books, and relics, and border-trophies, would have formed an admirable and most characteristic picture.

While Scott was reading, the sage grimalkin already mentioned had taken his seat in a chair beside the fire, and remained with fixed eye and grave demeanour, as if listening to the reader. I observed to Scott, that his cat seemed to have a black-letter taste in literature.

"Ah!" said he, "these cats are a very mysterious kind of folk. There is always more passing in their minds than we are aware of. It comes, no doubt, from their being so familiar with witches and warlocks." He went on to tell a little story about a gude man who was returning to his cottage one night, when, in a lonely out-of-the-way place, he met with a funeral procession of cats all in mourning, bearing one of their race to the grave in a coffin covered with a black velvet pall. The worthy man, astonished and half frightened at, so strange a pageant, hastened home and told what he had seen to his wife and children. Scarce had he finished, when a great black cat that sat beside the fire raised himself up, exclaimed, "Then I am king of the cats!" and vanished up the chimney. The funeral seen by the gude man was one of the cat dynasty.

"Our grimalkin here," added Scott, "sometimes reminds me of the story, by the airs of sovereignty which he assumes; and I am apt to treat him with respect, from the idea that he may be a great prince incog., and may some time or other come to the throne."

In this way, Scott would make the habits and peculiarities of even the dumb animals about him subjects for humorous remark or whimsical story.

Our evening was enlivened also by an occasional song from Sophia Scott, at the request of her father. She never wanted to be asked twice, but complied frankly and cheerfully. Her songs were all Scotch, sung without any accompaniment, in a simple manner, but with great spirit and expression, and in their native dialects, which gave them an additional charm. It was delightful to hear her carol off in sprightly style, and with an animated air, some of those generous-spirited old Jacobite songs, once current among the adherents of the Pretender in Scotland, in which he is designated by the appellation of "The Young Chevalier."

These songs were much relished by Scott, notwithstanding his loyalty; for the unfortunate "Chevalier" has always been a hero of romance with him, as he has with many other stanch adherents to the House of Hanover, now that the Stuart line has lost all its terrors. In speaking on the subject, Scott mentioned as a curious fact, that, among the papers of the "Chevalier," which had been submitted by Government to his inspection, he had found a memorial to Charles from some adherents in America, dated 1778, proposing to set up his standard in the back settlements. I regret that, at the time, I did not make more particular inquiries of Scott on the subject; the document in question, however, in all probability, still exists among the Pretender's papers, which are in the possession of the British Government.

In the course of the evening, Scott related the story of a whimsical picture hanging in the room, which had been drawn for him by a lady of his acquaintance. It represented the doleful perplexity of a wealthy and handsome young English knight of the olden time, who, in the course of a border foray, had been captured and carried off to the castle of a hard-headed and high-handed old baron. The unfortunate youth was thrown into a dungeon, and a tall gallows erected before the castle-gate for his execution. When all was ready, he was brought into the castle-hall, where the grim baron was seated in state, with his warriors armed to the teeth around him, and was given his choice, either to swing on the gibbet or to marry the baron's daughter. The last may be thought an easy alternative; but, unfortunately, the baron's young lady was hideously ugly, with a mouth from ear to ear, so that not a

suitor was to be had for her, either for love or money, and she was known throughout the border country by the name of Muckle-mouthed Mag!

The picture in question represented the unhappy dilemma of the handsome youth. Before him sat the grim baron, with a face worthy of the father of such a daughter, and looking daggers and rat's-bane. On one side of him was Muckle-mouthed Mag, with an amorous smile across the whole breadth of her countenance, and a leer enough to turn a man to stone; on the other side was the father-confessor, a sleek friar, jogging the youth's elbow, and pointing to the gallows, seen in perspective through the open portal.

The story goes, that after long labouring in mind between the altar and the halter, the love of life prevailed, and the youth resigned himself to the charms of Muckle-mouthed Mag. Contrary to all the probabilities of romance, the match proved a happy one. The baron's daughter, if not beautiful, was a most exemplary wife; her husband was never troubled with any of those doubts and jealousies which sometimes mar the happiness of connubial life, and was made the father of a fair and undoubtedly legitimate line, which still flourishes on the border.

I give but a faint outline of the story from vague recollection; it may, perchance, be more richly related elsewhere, by some one who may retain something of the delightful humour with which Scott recounted it.

When I retired for the night, I found it almost impossible to sleep; the idea of being under the roof of Scott; of being on the borders of the Tweed, in the very centre of that region which had for some time past been the favourite scene of romantic fiction; and above all, the recollections of the ramble I had taken, the company in which I had taken it, and the conversation which had passed, all fermented in my mind, and nearly drove sleep from my pillow.

On the following morning, the sun darted his beams from over the hills through the low lattice window. I rose at an early hour, and looked out between the branches of eglantine which overhung the casement. To my surprise Scott was already up and forth, seated on a fragment of stone, and chat-

ting with the workmen employed on the new building. I had supposed, after the time he had wasted upon me yesterday, he would be closely occupied this morning: but he appeared like a man of leisure, who had nothing to do but bask in the sun shine and amuse himself.

I soon dressed myself and joined him. He talked about his proposed plans of Abbotsford: happy would it have been for him could he have contented himself with his delightful little vine-covered cottage, and the simple, yet hearty and hospitable style, in which he lived at the time of my visit. The great pile of Abbotsford, with the huge expense it entailed upon him, of servants, retainers, guests, and baronial style, was a drain upon his purse, a tax upon his exertions, and a weight upon his mind, that finally crushed him.

As yet, however, all was in embryo and perspective, and Scott pleased himself with picturing out his future residence, as he would one of the fanciful creations of his own romances. "It was one of his air castles," he said, "which he was reducing to solid stone, and mortar." About the place were strewn various morsels from the ruins of Melrose Abbey, which were to be incorporated in his mansion. He had already constructed out of similar materials a kind of Gothic shrine over a spring, and had surmounted it by a small stone cross.

Among the relics from the Abbey which lay scattered before us was a most quaint and antique little lion, either of red stone, or painted red, which hit my fancy. I forget whose cognizance it was; but I shall never forget the delightful observations concerning old Melrose to which it accidentally gave rise.

The Abbey was evidently a pile that called up all Scott's poetic and romantic feelings; and one to which he was enthusiastically attached by the most fanciful and delightful of his early associations. He spoke of it, I may say, with affection. "There is no telling," said he, "what treasures are hid in that glorious old pile. It is a famous place for antiquarian plunder; there are such rich bits of old-time sculpture for the architect, and old-time story for the poet. There is as rare picking in it as in a Stilton cheese, and in the same taste—the mouldier the better."

He went on to mention circumstances of "mighty import connected with the Abbey, which had never been touched, and which had even escaped the researches of Johnny Bower. The heart of Robert Bruce, the hero of Scotland, had been buried in it. He dwelt on the beautiful story of Bruce's pious and chivalrous request in his dying hour, that his heart might be carried to the Holy Land and placed in the Holy Sepulchre, in fulfilment of a vow of pilgrimage; and of the loyal expedition of Sir James Douglas to convey the glorious relic. Much might be made, he said, out of the adventures of Sir James in that adventurous age; of his fortunes in Spain, and his death in a crusade against the Moors; with the subsequent fortunes of the heart of Robert Bruce, until it was brought back to its native land, and enshrined within the holy walls of Melrose.

As Scott sat on a stone talking in this way, and knocking with his staff against the little red lion which lay prostrate before him, his grey eyes twinkled beneath his shagged eyebrows; scenes, images, incidents, kept breaking upon his mind as he proceeded, mingled with touches of the mysterious and supernatural as connected with the heart of Bruce. It seemed as if a poem or romance were breaking vaguely on his imagination. That he subsequently contemplated something of the kind, as connected with this subject, and with his favourite ruin of Melrose, is evident from his introduction to "The Monastery;" and it is a pity that he never succeeded in following out those shadowy but enthusiastic conceptions.

A summons to breakfast broke off our conversation, when I begged to recommend to Scott's attention my friend the little red lion, who had led to such an interesting topic, and hoped he might receive some niche or station in the future castle, worthy of his evident antiquity and apparent dignity. Scott assured me, with comic gravity, that the valiant little lion should be most honourably entertained; I hope, therefore, that he still flourishes at Abbotsford.

Before dismissing the theme of the relics from the Abbey, I will mention another, illustrative of Scott's varied humours. This was a human skull, which had probably belonged of yore to one of those jovial friars, so honourably mentioned in the old border ballad:—

"O the monks of Melrose made gude kale
On Fridays, when they fasted;
They wanted neither beef nor ale,
As long as their neighbours' lasted."

This skull Scott had caused to be cleaned and varnished, and placed it on a chest of drawers in his chamber, immediately opposite his bed; where I have seen it grinning most dismally. It was an object of great awe and horror to the superstitious housemaids; and Scott used to amuse himself with their apprehensions. Sometimes, in changing his dress, he would leave his neckcloth coiled round it like a turban, and none of the "lasses" dared to remove it. It was a matter of great wonder and speculation among them that the laird should have such an "awsome fancy for an auld girning skull."

At breakfast that morning, Scott gave an amusing account of a little Highlander called Campbell of the North, who had a lawsuit of many years' standing with a nobleman in his neighbourhood about the boundaries of their estates. It was the leading object of the little man's life; the running theme of all his conversations; he used to detail all the circumstances at full length to everybody he met, and, to aid him in his description of the premises, and make his story "mair preceese," he had a great map made of his estate, a huge roll several feet long, which he used to carry about on his shoulder. Campbell was a long-bodied, but short and bandy-legged little man, always clad in the Highland garb; and as he went about with this great roll on his shoulder, and his little legs curving like a pair of parentheses below his kilt, he was an odd figure to behold. He was like little David shouldering the spear of Goliath, which was "like unto a weaver's beam."

Whenever sheep-shearing was over, Campbell used to set out for Edinburgh to attend to his lawsuit. At the inns he paid double for all his meals and his nights' lodgings; telling the landlords to keep it in mind until his return, so that he might come back that way at free cost; for he knew, he said, that he would spend all his money among the lawyers at Edinburgh, so he thought it best to secure a retreat home again.

On one of his visits he called upon his lawyer, but was told he was not at home, but his lady was. "It is just the same thing," said little Campbell. On being shown into the parlour,

he unrolled his map, stated his case at full length, and having gone through with his story, gave her the customary fee. She would have declined it, but he insisted on her taking it. "I ha' had just as much pleasure," said he, "in telling the whole tale to you, as I should have had in telling it to your husband, and I believe full as much profit."

The last time he saw Scott, he told him he believed he and the laird were near a settlement, as they agreed to within a few miles of the boundary. If I recollect right, Scott added that he advised the little man to consign his cause and his map to the care of "Slow Willie Mowbray," of tedious memory; an Edinburgh worthy, much employed by the country people, for he tired out everybody in office by repeated visits and drawling, endless prolixity, and gained every suit by dint of boring.

These little stories and anecdotes, which abounded in Scott's conversation, rose naturally out of the subject, and were perfectly unforced; though in thus relating them in a detached way, without the observations or circumstances which led to them, and which have passed from my recollection, they want their setting to give them proper relief. They will serve, however, to show the natural play of his mind, in its familiar moods, and its fecundity in graphic and characteristic detail.

His daughter Sophia and his son Charles were those of his family who seemed most to feel and understand his humours, and to take delight in his conversation. Mrs. Scott did not always pay the same attention, and would now and then make a casual remark which would operate a little like a damper. Thus, one morning at breakfast, when Dominie Thomson, the tutor, was present, Scott was going on with great glee to relate an anecdote of the laird of Macnab, "who, poor fellow!" premised he, "is dead and gone—" "Why, Mr. Scott," exclaimed the good lady, "Macnab's not dead, is he?" "Faith, my dear," replied Scott, with humorous gravity, "if he's not dead they've done him great injustice,—for they've buried him."

The joke passed harmless and unnoticed by Mrs. Scott, but hit the poor Dominie just as he had raised a cup of tea to his lips, causing a burst of laughter which sent half of the contents about the table.

After breakfast, Scott was occupied for some time correcting proof-sheets, which he had received by the mail. The novel of "Rob Roy," as I have already observed, was at that time in the press, and I supposed them to be the proof-sheets of that work. The authorship of the Waverley novels was still a matter of conjecture and uncertainty; though few doubted their being principally written by Scott. One proof to me of his being the author was, that he never adverted to them. A man so fond of anything Scottish, and anything relating to national history or local legend, could not have been mute respecting such productions, had they been written by another. He was fond of quoting the works of his contemporaries; he was continually reciting scraps of border songs, or relating anecdotes of border story. With respect to his own poems, and their merits, however, he was mute, and while with him I observed a scrupulous silence on the subject.

I may here mention a singular fact, of which I was not aware at the time, that Scott was very reserved with his children respecting his own writings, and was even disinclined to their reading his romantic poems. I learnt this, sometime after, from a passage in one of his letters to me, adverting to a set of the American miniature edition of his poems, which, on my return to England, I forwarded to one of the young ladies. "In my hurry," writes he, "I have not thanked you, in Sophia's name, for the kind attention which furnished her with the American volumes. I am not quite sure I can add my own, since you have made her acquainted with much more of papa's folly than she would otherwise have learned; for I have taken special care they should never see any of these things during their earlier years."

To return to the thread of my narrative. When Scott had got through his brief literary occupation, we set out on a ramble. The young ladies started to accompany us, but had not gone far when they met a poor old labourer and his distressed family, and turned back to take them to the house and relieve them.

On passing the bounds of Abbotsford, we came upon a bleak-looking farm, with a forlorn crazy old manse, or farmhouse, standing in naked desolation. This, however, Scott told me, was an ancient hereditary property called Lauckend,

about as valuable as the patrimonial estate of Don Quixote, and which, in like manner, conferred an hereditary dignity upon its proprietor, who was a laird, and, though poor as a rat, prided himself upon his ancient blood and the standing of his house. He was accordingly called Lauckend according to the Scottish custom of naming a man after his family estate, but he was more generally known through the country round by the name of Lauckie Long Legs, from the length of his limbs. While Scott was giving this account of him, we saw him at a distance striding along one of his fields, with his plaid fluttering about him; and he seemed well to deserve his appellation, for he looked all legs and tartan.

Lauckie knew nothing of the world beyond his neighbourhood. Scott told me that on returning to Abbotsford from his visit to France, immediately after the war, he was called on by his neighbours generally to inquire after foreign parts. Among the number, came Lauckie Long Legs and an old brother as ignorant as himself. They had many inquiries to make about the French, whom they seemed to consider some remote and semi-barbarous horde. "And what like are thae barbarians in their ain country?" said Lauckie; "can they write?—can they cipher?" He was quite astonished to learn that they were nearly as much advanced in civilization as the gude folks of Abbotsford.

After living for a long time in single blessedness, Lauckie all at once, and not long before my visit to the neighbourhood, took it into his head to get married. The neighbours were all surprised; but the family connexion, who were as proud as they were poor, were grievously scandalized, for they thought the young woman on whom he had set his mind quite beneath him. It was in vain, however, that they remonstrated on the misalliance he was about to make: he was not to be swayed from his determination. Arraying himself in his best, and saddling a gaunt steed that might have rivalled Rosinante, and placing a pillion behind his saddle, he departed to wed and bring home the humble lassie who was to be made mistress of the venerable hovel of Lauckend, and who lived in a village on the opposite side of the Tweed.

A small event of the kind makes a great stir in a little quiet country neighbourhood. The word soon circulated

through the village of Melrose, and the cottages in its vicinity, that Lauckie Long Legs had gone over the Tweed to fetch home his bride. All the good folks assembled at the bridge to await his return. Lauckie, however, disappointed them; for he crossed the river at a distant ford, and conveyed his bride safe to his mansion, without being perceived.

Let me step forward in the course of events, and relate the fate of poor Lauckie, as it was communicated to me a year or two afterwards in a letter by Scott. From the time of his marriage he had no longer any peace, owing to the constant intermeddlings of his relations, who would not permit him to be happy in his own way, but endeavoured to set him at variance with his wife. Lauckie refused to credit any of their stories to her disadvantage; but the incessant warfare he had to wage in defence of her good name, wore out both flesh and spirit. His last conflict was with his own brothers, in front of his paternal mansion. A furious scolding-match took place between them; Lauckie made a vehement profession of faith in favour of her immaculate honesty, and then fell dead at the threshold of his own door. His person, his character, his name, his story, and his fate, entitled him to be immortalized in one of Scott's novels, and I looked to recognise him in some of the succeeding works from his pen; but I looked in vain.

After passing by the domains of honest Lauckie, Scott pointed out, at a distance, the Eildon stone. There in ancient days stood the Eildon tree, beneath which Thomas the Rhymer, according to popular tradition, dealt forth his prophecies, some of which still exist in antiquated ballads.

Here we turned up a little glen, with a small burn or brook whimpering and dashing along it, making an occasional waterfall, and overhung in some places with mountain-ash and weeping-birch. We are now, said Scott, treading classic, or rather fairy ground. This is the haunted glen of Thomas the Rhymer, where he met with the queen of fairy land, and this the bogle burn, or goblin brook, along which she rode on her dapple-grey palfrey, with silver bells ringing at the bridle.

"Here," said he, pausing, "is Huntley Bank, on which

Thomas the Rhymer lay musing and sleeping when he saw,
or dreamt he saw, the queen of Elfland :—

‘ True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank ;
A ferlie he spied wi’ his e’e ;
And there he saw a ladye bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon tree. ”
Her skirt was o’ the grass green silk,
Her mantle o’ the velvet fyne ;
At ilka tett of her horse’s mane
Hung fifty siller bells and nine. ’ ”

Here Scott repeated several of the stanzas, and recounted the circumstance of Thomas the Rhymer’s interview with the fairy, and his being transported by her to fairy land :—

“ And til seven years were gone and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen. ”

“ It is a fine old story,” said he, “ and might be wrought up into a capital tale. ”

Scott continued on, leading the way as usual, and limping up the wizard glen, talking as he went, but as his back was toward me I could only hear the deep growling tones of his voice, like the low breathing of an organ, without distinguishing the words, until pausing, and turning his face towards me, I found he was reciting some scrap of border minstrelsy about Thomas the Rhymer. This was continually the case in my ramblings with him about this storied neighbourhood. His mind was fraught with the traditionary fictions connected with every object around him, and he would breathe it forth as he went, apparently as much for his own gratification as for that of his companion.

“ Nor hill, nor brook, we paced along,
But had its legend or its song. ”

His voice was deep and sonorous, he spoke with a Scottish accent, and with somewhat of the Northumbrian “ burr,” which, to my mind, gave a Doric strength and simplicity to his elocution. His recitation of poetry was, at times, magnificent.

I think it was in the course of this ramble that my friend Hamlet, the black greyhound, got into a sad scrape. The dogs were beating about the glens and fields as usual, and

had been for some time out of sight, when we heard a barking at some distance to the left. Shortly after we saw some sheep scampering on the hills, with the dogs after them. Scott applied to his lips the ivory whistle, always hanging at his button-hole, and soon called in the culprits, excepting Hamlet. Hastening up a bank which commanded a view along a fold or hollow of the hills, we beheld the sable prince of Denmark standing by the bleeding body of a sheep. The carcass was still warm, the throat bore marks of the fatal grip, and Hamlet's muzzle was stained with blood. Never was culprit more completely caught *in flagrante delictu*. I supposed the doom of poor Hamlet to be sealed; for no higher offence can be committed by a dog in a country abounding with sheep-walks. Scott, however, had a greater value for his dogs than for his sheep. They were his companions and friends. Hamlet, too, though an irregular, impertinent kind of youngster, was evidently a favourite. He would not for some time believe it could be he who had killed the sheep. It must have been some cur of the neighbourhood, that had made off on our approach, and left poor Hamlet in the lurch. Proofs, however, were too strong, and Hamlet was generally condemned. "Well, well," said Scott, "it's partly my own fault. I have given up coursing for sometime past, and the poor dog has had no chance after game to take the fire edge off of him. If he was put after a hare occasionally he never would meddle with sheep."

I understood, afterwards, that Scott actually got a pony, and went out now and then coursing with Hamlet, who, in consequence, showed no further inclination for mutton.

A further stroll among the hills brought us to what Scott pronounced the remains of a Roman camp, and as we sat upon a hillock which had once formed a part of the ramparts, he pointed out the traces of the lines and bulwarks, and the prætorium, and showed a knowledge of castrametation that would not have disgraced the antiquarian Oldbuck himself. Indeed, various circumstances that I observed about Scott during my visit, concurred to persuade me that many of the antiquarian humours of Monkbarns were taken from his own richly-compounded character, and that some of the scenes and

personages of that admirable novel were furnished by his immediate neighbourhood.

He gave me several anecdotes of a noted pauper named Andrew Gemmells, or Gammel, as it was pronounced, who had once flourished on the banks of Galla Water, immediately opposite Abbotsford, and whom he had seen and talked and joked with when a boy; and I instantly recognised the likeness of that mirror of philosophic vagabonds and Nestor of beggars, Edie Ochiltree. I was on the point of pronouncing the name and recognising the portrait, when I recollected the incognito observed by Scott with respect to novels, and checked myself; but it was one among many things that tended to convince me of his authorship.

His picture of Andrew Gemmells exactly accorded with that of Edie as to his height, carriage, and soldier-like air, as well as his arch and sarcastic humour. His home, if home he had, was at Gallashiels; but he went "daundering" about the country, along the green shaws and beside the burns, and was a kind of walking chronicle throughout the valleys of the Tweed, the Ettrick, and the Yarrow; carrying the gossip from house to house, commenting on the inhabitants and their concerns, and never hesitating to give them a dry rub as to any of their faults or follies.

A shrewd beggar like Andrew Gemmells, Scott added, who could sing the old Scotch airs, tell stories and traditions, and gossip away the long winter evenings, was by no means an unwelcome visitor at a lonely manse or cottage. The children would run to welcome him, and place his stool in a warm corner of the ingle nook, and the old folks would receive him as a privileged guest.

As to Andrew, he looked upon them all as a parson does upon his parishioners, and considered the alms he received as much his due as the other does his tithes. "I rather think," said Scott, "Andrew considered himself more of a gentleman than those who toiled for a living, and that he secretly looked down upon the painstaking peasants that fed and sheltered him."

He had derived his aristocratical notions in some degree from being admitted occasionally to a precarious sociability with some of the small country gentry, who were sometimes

in want of company to help while away the time. With these Andrew would now and then play at cards and dice, and he never lacked "siller in pouch" to stake on a game, which he did with a perfect air of a man to whom money was a matter of little moment; and no one could lose his money with more gentlemanlike coolness.

Among those who occasionally admitted him to this familiarity was old John Scott of Galla, a man of family, who inhabited his paternal mansion of Torwoodlee. Some distinction of rank, however, was still kept up. The laird sat on the inside of the window and the beggar on the outside, and they played cards on the sill.

Andrew now and then told the laird a piece of his mind very freely; especially on one occasion, when he had sold some of his paternal lands to build himself a larger house with the proceeds. The speech of honest Andrew smacks of the shrewdness of Edie Ochiltree.

"It's a' varra weel—it's a' varra weel, Torwoodlee," said he; "but who would ha' thought that your father's son would ha' sold two gude estates to build a shaw's (cuckoo's) nest on the side of the hill?"

That day there was an arrival at Abbotsford of two English tourists; one a gentleman of fortune and landed estate, the other a young clergyman whom he appeared to have under his patronage, and to have brought with him as a travelling companion.

The patron was one of those well-bred, commonplace gentlemen with which England is overrun. He had great deference for Scott, and endeavoured to acquit himself learnedly in his company, aiming continually at abstract disquisitions, for which Scott had little relish. The conversation of the latter, as usual, was studded with anecdotes and stories, some of them of great pith and humour: the well-bred gentleman was either too dull to feel their point, or too decorous to indulge in hearty merriment; the honest parson, on the contrary, who was not too refined to be happy, laughed loud and long at every joke, and enjoyed them with the zest of a man who has more merriment in his heart than coin in his pocket.

After they were gone, some comments were made upon their different deportments. Scott spoke very respectfully of the good breeding and measured manners of the man of wealth, but with a kindlier feeling of the honest parson, and the homely but hearty enjoyment with which he relished every pleasantry. "I doubt," said he, "whether the parson's lot in life is not the best; if he cannot command as many of the good things of this world by his own purse as his patron can, he beats him all hollow in his enjoyment of them when set before him by others. Upon the whole," added he, "I rather think I prefer the honest parson's good humour to his patron's good breeding; I have a great regard for a hearty laugh."

He went on to speak of the great influx of English travellers, which of late years had inundated Scotland; and doubted whether they had not injured the old-fashioned Scottish character. "Formerly, they came here occasionally as sportsmen," said he, "to shoot moor game, without any idea of looking at scenery; and they moved about the country in hardy simple style, coping with the country people in their own way; but now they come rolling about in their equipages, to see ruins and spend money, and their lavish extravagance has played the vengeance with the common people. It has made them rapacious in their dealings with strangers, greedy after money, and extortionate in their demands for the most trivial services. Formerly," continued he, "the poorer classes of our people were, comparatively, disinterested; they offered their services gratuitously in promoting the amusement or aiding the curiosity of strangers, and were gratified by the smallest compensation: but now they make a trade of showing rocks and ruins, and are as greedy as Italian cicerones. They look upon the English as so many walking money-bags; the more they are shaken and poked, the more they will leave behind them."

I told him that he had a great deal to answer for on that head, since it was the romantic associations he had thrown by his writings over so many out-of-the-way places in Scotland that had brought in the influx of curious travellers.

Scott laughed, and said he believed I might be in some measure in the right, as he recollected a circumstance in point.

Being one time at Glenross, an old woman who kept a small inn, which had but little custom, was uncommonly officious in her attendance upon him, and absolutely incommoded him with her civilities. The secret at length came out. As he was about to depart, she addressed him with many curtsies, and said she understood he was the gentleman that had written a bonnie book about Loch Katrine. She begged him to write a little about their lake also, for she understood his book had done the inn at Loch Katrine a muckle deal of good.

On the following day, I made an excursion with Scott and the young ladies to Dryburgh Abbey. We went in an open carriage drawn by two sleek old black horses, for which Scott seemed to have an affection, as he had for every dumb animal that belonged to him. Our road lay through a variety of scenes, rich in poetical and historical associations, about most of which Scott had something to relate. In one part of the drive he pointed to an old border keep, or fortress, on the summit of a naked hill, several miles off, which he called Smallholm Tower, and a rocky knoll on which it stood, the "Sandy Knowe crags." It was a place, he said peculiarly dear to him from the recollections of childhood. His grandfather had lived there in the old Smallholm Grange, or farmhouse; and he had been sent there, when but two years old, on account of his lameness, that he might have the benefit of the pure air of the hills, and be under the care of his grandmother and aunts.

In the introduction of one of the cantos of "Marmion," he has depicted his grandfather and the fireside of the farmhouse; and has given an amusing picture of himself in his boyish years:—

"Still with vain fondness could I trace
Anew each kind familiar face,
That brightened at our evening fire;
From the thatched mansion's gray-haired sire,
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood;
Whose eye in age, quick, clear and keen,
Showed what in youth its glance had been;
Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
Content with equity unbought;
To him the venerable priest,
Our frequent and familiar guest,

Whose life and manners well could paint
Alike the student and the saint;
Alas! whose speech too oft I broke
With gambol rude and timeless joke;
For I was wayward, bold, and wild,
A self-willed imp, a grandame's child;
But half a plague, and half a jest,
Was still endured, beloved, carest."

It was, he said, during his residence at Smallholm crags that he first imbibed his passion for legendary tales, border traditions, and old national songs and ballads. His grandmother and aunts were well versed in that kind of lore, so current in Scottish country life. They used to recount them in long, gloomy, winter days, and about the ingle nook at night, in conclave with their gossip visitors; and little Walter would sit and listen with greedy ear, thus taking into his infant mind the seeds of many a splendid fiction.

There was an old shepherd, he said, in the service of the family, who used to sit under the sunny wall, and tell marvellous stories, and recite old-time ballads, as he knitted stockings. Scott used to be wheeled out in his chair in fine weather, and would sit beside the old man and listen to him for hours.

The situation of Sandy Knowe was favourable both for story-teller and listener. It commanded a wide view over all the border country, with its feudal towers, its haunted glens, and wizard streams. As the old shepherd told his tales, he could point out the very scene of action. Thus, before Scott could walk, he was made familiar with the scenes of his future stories; they were all seen as through a magic medium, and took that tinge of romance which they ever after retained in his imagination. From the height of Sandy Knowe, he may be said to have had the first look-out upon the promised land of his future glory.

On referring to Scott's works, I find many of the circumstances related in this conversation about the old tower, and the boyish scenes connected with it, recorded in the introduction to "Marmion," already cited. This was frequently the case with Scott; incidents and feelings that had appeared in his writings were apt to be mingled up in his conversation, for they had been taken from what he had witnessed and felt

in real life, and were connected with those scenes among which he lived, and moved, and had his being. I make no scruple at quoting the passage relative to the tower, though it repeats much of the foregone imagery, and with vastly superior effect —

“ Thus, while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charmed me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time ;
And feelings roused in life's first day
Glow in the line, and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charmed my fancy's wakening hour,
Though no broad river swept along
To claim perchance heroic song ;
Though sighed no groves in summer gale
To prompt of love a softer tale ;
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
Claimed homage from a shepherd's reed ;
Yet was poetic impulse given
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.
It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled ;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green ;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honeysuckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruined wall.
I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all his round surveyed ;
And still I thought that shattered tower
The mightiest work of human power ;
And marvelled as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitched my mind,
Of forayers, who, with headlong force,
Down from that strength had spurred their horse,
Their southern rapine to renew,
Far in the distant Cheviot's blue,
And, home returning, filled the hall
With revel, wassail-rout, and brawl ;
Methought that still with tramp and clang
The gateway's broken arches rang ;
Methought grim features, seamed with scars,
Glared through the window's rusty bars.
And ever by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,

Of lovers' slights, of ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms;
Of patriot battles, won of old,
By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold;
Of later fields of feud and fight,
When pouring from the Highland height
The Scottish clans, in headlong sway,
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
While stretched at length upon the floor,
Again I fought each combat o'er,
Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
The mimic ranks of war displayed;
And onward still the Scottish Lion bore,
And still the scattered Southron fled before."

Scott eyed the distant height of Sandy Knowe with an earnest gaze as we rode along, and said he had often thought of buying the place, repairing the old tower, and making it his residence. He has in some measure, however, paid off his early debt of gratitude, in clothing it with poetic and romantic associations, by his tale of "The Eve of St. John." It is to be hoped that those who actually possess so interesting a monument of Scott's early days will preserve it from further dilapidation.

Not far from Sandy Knowe, Scott pointed out another old border-hold, standing on the summit of a hill, which had been a kind of enchanted castle to him in his boyhood. It was the tower of Bemerside, the baronial residence of the Haigs, or De Hagas, one of the oldest families of the border. "There had seemed to him," he said, "almost a wizard spell hanging over it, in consequence of a prophecy of Thomas the Rhymer, in which, in his young days, he most potently believed:—

'Betide, betide, whate'er betide,
Haig shall be Haig of Bemerside.'

Scott added some particulars which showed that, in the present instance, the venerable Thomas had not proved a false prophet, for it was a noted fact that, amid all the changes and chances of the border—through all the feuds and forays, and sackings, and burnings, which had reduced most of the castles to ruins, and the proud families that once possessed them to poverty, the tower of Bemerside still remained unscathed, and was still the stronghold of the ancient family of Haig.

Prophecies, however, often insure their own fulfilment. It is very probable that the prediction of Thomas the Rhymer has linked the Haigs to their tower, as their rock of safety, and has induced them to cling to it, almost superstitiously, through hardships and inconveniences that would, otherwise, have caused its abandonment.

I afterwards saw, at Dryburgh Abbey, the burying-place of this predestinated and tenacious family, the inscription of which showed the value they set upon their antiquity :—

“Locus Sepulturæ,
Antiquissima Familia
De Haga
De Bemerside.”

In reverting to the days of his childhood, Scott observed that the lameness which had disabled him in infancy gradually decreased ; he soon acquired strength in his limbs, and though he always limped, he became, even in boyhood, a great walker. He used frequently to stroll from home and wander about the country for days together, picking up all kinds of local gossip, and observing popular scenes and characters. His father used to be vexed with him for this wandering propensity, and, shaking his head, would say he fancied the boy would make nothing but a pedler. As he grew older, he became a keen sportsman, and passed much of his time hunting and shooting. His field-sports led him into the most wild and unfrequented parts of the country, and in this way he picked up much of that local knowledge which he has since evinced in his writings.

His first visit to Loch Katrine, he said, was in his boyish days, on a shooting excursion. The island, which he has made the romantic residence of the Lady of the Lake, was then garrisoned by an old man and his wife. Their house was vacant ; they had put the key under the door, and were absent fishing. It was at that time a peaceful residence, but became afterwards a resort of smugglers, until they were ferreted out.

In after years, when Scott began to turn this local knowledge to literary account, he revisited many of those scenes of his early ramblings, and endeavoured to secure the fugitive remains of the traditions and songs that had charmed his boy-

hood. When collecting materials for his "Border Minstrelsy, he used, he said, to go from cottage to cottage and make the old wives repeat all they knew, if but two lines; and by putting these scraps together, he retrieved many a fine characteristic old ballad or tradition from oblivion.

I regret to say that I can recollect scarce anything of our visit to Dryburgh Abbey. It is on the estate of the Earl of Buchan. The religious edifice is a mere ruin, rich in Gothic antiquities, but especially interesting to Scott from containing the family vault and the tombs and monuments of his ancestors. He appeared to feel much chagrin at their being in the possession, and subject to the intermeddlings of the Earl, who was represented as a nobleman of an eccentric character. The latter, however, set great value on these sepulchral relics, and had expressed a lively anticipation of one day or other having the honour of burying Scott, and adding his monument to the collection, which he intended should be worthy of the "mighty Minstrel of the North,"—a prospective compliment which was by no means relished by the object of it.

One of my pleasant rambles with Scott, about the neighbourhood of Abbotsford, was taken in company with Mr. William Laidlaw, the steward of his estate. This was a gentleman for whom Scott entertained a particular value. He had been born to a competency, had been well educated, his mind was richly stored with varied information, and he was a man of sterling moral worth. Having been reduced by misfortune, Scott had got him to take charge of his estate. He lived at a small farm on the hill-side above Abbotsford, and was treated by Scott as a cherished and confidential friend, rather than a dependant.

As the day was showery, Scott was attended by one of his retainers, named Tommie Purdie, who carried his plaid, and who deserves especial mention. Sophia Scott used to call him her father's grand vizier, and she gave a playful account one evening, as she was hanging on her father's arm, of the consultations which he and Tommie used to have about matters relative to farming. Purdie was tenacious of his opinions, and he and Scott would have long disputes in front of the house, as to something that was to be done on the estate, until

the latter, fairly tired out, would abandon the ground and the argument, exclaiming, "Well, well, Tom, have it your own way!"

After a time, however, Purdie would present himself at the door of the parlour, and observe, "I ha' been thinking over the matter, and upon the whole I think I'll take your honour's advice."

Scott laughed heartily when this anecdote was told of him. "It was with him and Tom," he said, "as it was with an old laird and a pet servant, whom he had indulged until he was positive beyond all endurance. 'This won't do!' cried the old laird, in a passion, 'we can't live together any longer—we must part.' 'An' where the de'il does your honour mean to go?' replied the other."

I would, moreover, observe of Tom Purdie, that he was a firm believer in ghosts, and warlocks, and all kinds of old wives' fable. He was a religious man, too, mingling a little degree of Scottish pride in his devotion; for though his salary was but twenty pounds a-year, he had managed to afford seven pounds for a family Bible. It is true he had one hundred pounds clear of the world, and was looked up to by his comrades as a man of property.

In the course of our morning's walk, we stopped at a small house belonging to one of the labourers on the estate. The object of Scott's visit was to inspect a relic which had been dugged up in the Roman camp, and which, if I recollect right, he pronounced to have been a tongs. It was produced by the cottager's wife, a ruddy, healthy-looking dame, whom Scott addressed by the name of Ailie. As he stood regarding the relic, turning it round and round, and making comments upon it, half grave, half comic, with the cottage group around him, all joining occasionally in the colloquy, the inimitable character of Monkbarns was again brought to mind, and I seemed to see before me that prince of antiquarians and humourists holding forth to his unlearned and unbelieving neighbours.

Whenever Scott touched in this way upon local antiquities, and in all his familiar conversations about local traditions and superstitions, there was always a sly and quiet humour running at the bottom of his discourse, and playing about his counte

nance, as if he sported with the subject. It seemed to me as if he distrusted his own enthusiasm, and was disposed to droll upon his own humours and peculiarities, yet, at the same time, a poetic gleam in his eye would show that he really took a strong relish and interest in them. "It was a pity," he said, "that antiquarians were generally so dry, for the subjects they handled were rich in historical and poetic recollections, in picturesque details, in quaint and heroic characteristics, and in all kinds of curious and obsolete ceremonials. They are always groping among the rarest materials for poetry, but they have no idea of turning them to poetic use. Now every fragment from old times has, in some degree, its story with it, or gives an inkling of something characteristic of the circumstances and manners of its day, and so sets the imagination at work."

For my own part, I never met with antiquarian so delightful, either in his writings or his conversation; and the quiet, sub-acid humour that was prone to mingle in his disquisitions, gave them, to me, a peculiar and an exquisite flavour. But he seemed, in fact, to undervalue everything that concerned himself. The play of his genius was so easy that he was unconscious of its mighty power, and made light of those sports of intellect that shamed the efforts and labours of other minds.

Our ramble this morning took us again up the Rhymer's Glen, and by Huntley Bank, and Huntley Wood, and the silver waterfall overhung with weeping birches and mountain ashes, those delicate and beautiful trees which grace the green shaws and burnsidcs of Scotland. The heather, too, that closely woven robe of Scottish landscape which covers the nakedness of its hills and mountains, tinted the neighbourhood with soft and rich colours. As we ascended the glen, the prospects opened upon us; Melrose, with its towers and pinnacles, lay below; beyond was the Eildon hills, the Cowden Knowes, the Tweed, the Galla Water, and all the storied vicinity; the whole landscape varied by gleams of sunshine and driving showers.

Scott, as usual, took the lead, limping along with great activity, and in joyous mood, giving scraps of border rhymes and border stories; two or three times in the course of our

walk there were drizzling showers, which I supposed would put an end to our ramble, but my companions trudged on as unconcernedly as if it had been fine weather.

At length I asked whether we had not better seek some shelter. "True," said Scott, "I did not recollect that you were not accustomed to our Scottish mists. This is a lachrymose climate, evermore showering. We, however, are children of the mist, and must not mind a little whimpering of the clouds any more than a man must mind the weeping of an hysterical wife. As you are not accustomed to be wet through, as a matter of course, in a morning's walk, we will bide a bit under the lea of this bank until the shower is over." Taking his seat under shelter of a thicket, he called to his man George for his tartan, then, turning to me, "Come," said he, "come under my plaidy, as the old song goes;" so, making me nestle down beside him, he wrapped a part of the plaid round me, and took me, as he said, under his wing.

While we were thus nestled together, he pointed to a hole in the opposite bank of the glen. That, he said, was the hole of an old grey badger, who was, doubtless, snugly housed in this bad weather. Sometimes he saw him at the entrance of his hole, like a hermit at the door of his cell, telling his beads, or reading a homily. He had a great respect for the venerable anchorite, and would not suffer him to be disturbed. He was a kind of successor to Thomas the Rhymer, and, perhaps, might be Thomas himself returned from fairy land, but still under fairy spell.

Some accident turned the conversation upon Hogg the poet, in which Laidlaw, who was seated beside us, took a part. Hogg had once been a shepherd in the service of his father, and Laidlaw gave many interesting anecdotes of him, of which I now retain no recollection. They used to tend the sheep together when Laidlaw was a boy, and Hogg would recite the first struggling conceptions of his muse. At night, when Laidlaw was quartered comfortably in bed in the farmhouse, poor Hogg would take to the shepherd's hut in the field on the hillside, and there lie awake for hours together, and look at the stars and make poetry, which he would repeat the next day to his companion.

Scott spoke in warm terms of Hogg, and repeated passages

from his beautiful poem of "Kelmeny," to which he gave great and well-merited praise. He gave, also, some amusing anecdotes of Hogg, and his publisher, Blackwood, who was at that time just rising into the bibliographical importance which he has since enjoyed.

Hogg in one of his poems, I believe the "Pilgrims of the Sun," had dabbled a little in metaphysics, and, like his heroes, had got into the clouds. Blackwood, who began to affect criticism, argued stoutly with him as to the necessity of omitting or elucidating some obscure passage. Hogg was immovable.

"But, man," said Blackwood, "I dinna ken what ye mean in this passage." "Hout tout, man," replied Hogg, impatiently, "I dinna ken always what I mean mysel'." There is many a metaphysical poet in the same predicament with honest Hogg.

Scott promised to invite the Shepherd to Abbotsford during my visit, and I anticipated much gratification in meeting with him, from the account I had received of his character and manners and the great pleasure I had derived from his works. Circumstances, however, prevented Scott from performing his promise; and to my great regret I left Scotland without seeing one of its most original and national characters.

When the weather held up, we continued our walk until we came to a beautiful sheet of water in the bosom of the mountain, called, if I recollect right, the lake of Cauldshiel. Scott prided himself much upon this little Mediterranean sea in his dominions, and hoped I was not too much spoiled by our great lakes in America to relish it. He proposed to take me out to the centre of it to a fine point of view; for which purpose we embarked in a small boat, which had been put on the lake by his neighbour, Lord Somerville. As I was about to step on board, I observed in large letters on one of the benches, "Search No. 2." I paused for a moment and repeated the inscription aloud, trying to recollect something I had heard or read to which it alluded. "Pshaw," cried Scott, "it is only some of Lord Somerville's nonsense—get in! In an instant scenes in the "Antiquary" connected with "Search No. 1," flashed upon my mind. "Ah! I remember now,"

said I, and with a laugh took my seat, but adverted no more to the circumstance.

We had a pleasant row about the lake, which commanded some pretty scenery. The most interesting circumstance connected with it, however, according to Scott, was, that it was haunted by a bogle in the shape of a water-bull, which lived in the deep parts, and now and then came forth upon dry land and made a tremendous roaring that shook the very hills. This story had been current in the vicinity from time immemorial; there was a man living who declared he had seen the bull, and he was believed by many of his simple neighbours. "I don't choose to contradict the tale," said Scott, "for I am willing to have my lake stocked with any fish, flesh, or fowl that my neighbours think proper to put into it; and these old wives' fables are a kind of property in Scotland that belong to the estates and go with the soil. Our streams and lochs are like the rivers and pools in Germany, that have all their Wasser Nixe, or water-witches, and I have a fancy for these kind of amphibious bogles and hobgoblins."

Scott went on, after we had landed, to make many remarks, mingled with picturesque anecdotes, concerning the fabulous beings with which the Scotch were apt to people the wild streams and lochs that occur in the solemn and lonely scenes of their mountains, and to compare them with similar superstitions among the northern nations of Europe; but Scotland, he said, was above all other countries for this wild and vivid progeny of the fancy, from the nature of the scenery, the misty magnificence and vagueness of the climate, the wild and gloomy events of its history; the clannish divisions of its people; their local feelings, notions, and prejudices; the individuality of their dialect, in which all kinds of odd and peculiar notions were incorporated; by the secluded life of their mountaineers; the lonely habits of their pastoral people, much of whose time was passed on the solitary hillsides; their traditional songs, which clothed every rock and stream with old-world stories, handed down from age to age, and generation to generation. The Scottish mind, he said, was made up of poetry and strong common sense; and the very strength of the latter gave perpetuity and luxuriance to the former. It

was a strong tenacious soil, into which, when once a seed of poetry fell, it struck deep root and brought forth abundantly. "You will never weed these popular stories and songs and superstitions out of Scotland," said he. "It is not so much that the people believe in them, as that they delight in them. They belong to the native hills and streams, of which they are fond; and to the history of their forefathers, of which they are proud."

"It would do your heart good," continued he, "to see a number of our poor country people seated round the ingle nook, which is generally capacious enough, and passing the long, dark, dreary winter nights listening to some old wife, or strolling gaberlunzie, dealing out auld-world stories about bogles and warlocks, or about raids and forays, and border skirmishes; or reciting some ballad stuck full of those fighting names that stir up a true Scotchman's blood like the sound of a trumpet. These traditional tales and ballads have lived for ages in mere oral circulation, being passed from father to son, or rather from grandam to grandchild, and are a kind of hereditary property of the poor peasantry, of which it would be hard to deprive them, as they have not circulating libraries to supply them with works of fiction in their place."

I do not pretend to give the precise words, but, as nearly as I can from scanty memorandums and vague recollections, the leading ideas of Scott. I am constantly sensible, however, how far I fall short of his copiousness and richness.

He went on to speak of the elves and sprites, so frequent in Scottish legend. "Our fairies, however," said he, "though they dress in green, and gambol by moonlight about the banks, and shaws, and burn-sides, are not such pleasant little folks as the English fairies, but are apt to bear more of the warlock in their natures, and to play spiteful tricks. When I was a boy, I used to look wistfully at the green hillocks that were said to be haunted by fairies, and felt sometimes as if I should like to lie down by them and sleep, and be carried off to Fairy Land, only that I did not like some of the cantrips which used now and then to be played off upon visitors."

Here Scott recounted, in graphic style, and with much humour, a little story which used to be current in the neighbourhood, of an honest burgess of Selkirk, who, being at work

upon the hill of Peatlaw, fell asleep upon one of these "fairy knowes," or hillocks. When he awoke, he rubbed his eyes and gazed about him with astonishment, for he was in the market-place of a great city, with a crowd of people bustling about him, not one of whom he knew. At length he accosted a bystander, and asked him the name of the place. "Hout, man," replied the other, "are ye in the heart o' Glasgow, and speer the name of it?" The poor man was astonished, and would not believe either ears or eyes; he insisted that he had laid down to sleep but half an hour before on the Peatlaw, near Selkirk. He came well-nigh being taken up for a mad-man, when, fortunately, a Selkirk man came by who knew him, and took charge of him, and conducted him back to his native place. Here, however, he was likely to fare no better, when he spoke of having been whisked in his sleep from the Peatlaw to Glasgow. The truth of the matter at length came out; his coat, which he had taken off when at work on the Peatlaw, was found lying near a "fairy knowe," and his bonnet, which was missing, was discovered on the weathercock of Lanark steeple. So it was as clear as day that he had been carried through the air by the fairies while he was sleeping, and his bonnet had been blown off by the way.

I give this little story but meagrely from a scanty memorandum; Scott has related it in somewhat different style in a note to one of his poems: but in narration these anecdotes derived their chief zest from the quiet but delightful humour, the *bonhomie*, with which he seasoned them, and the sly glance of the eye from under his bushy eyebrows, with which they were accompanied.

That day at dinner we had Mr. Laidlaw and his wife, and a female friend who accompanied them. The latter was a very intelligent, respectable person, about the middle age, and was treated with particular attention and courtesy by Scott. Our dinner was a most agreeable one; for the guests were evidently cherished visitors to the house, and felt that they were appreciated.

When they were gone, Scott spoke of them in the most cordial manner. "I wished to show you," said he, "some of our really excellent, plain Scotch people; not fine gentlemen

and ladies, for such you can meet with everywhere, and they are everywhere the same. The character of a nation, is not to be learnt from its fine folks."

He then went on with a particular eulogium on the lady who had accompanied the Laidlaws. She was the daughter, he said, of a poor country clergyman, who had died in debt, and left her an orphan and destitute. Having had a good plain education, she immediately set up a child's school, and had soon a numerous flock under her care, by which she earned a decent maintenance. That, however, was not her main object. Her first care was to pay off her father's debts, that no ill word or ill will might rest upon his memory. This, by dint of Scottish economy, backed by filial reverence and pride, she accomplished, though in the effort she subjected herself to every privation. Not content with this, she in certain instances refused to take pay for the tuition of the children of some of her neighbours, who had befriended her father in his need, and had since fallen into poverty. "In a word," added Scott, "she is a fine old Scotch girl; and I delight in her more than in many a fine lady I have known, and I have known many of the finest."

It is time, however, to draw this rambling narrative to a close. Several days were passed by me in the way I have attempted to describe, in almost constant, familiar, and joyous conversation with Scott; it was as if I were admitted to a social communion with Shakspeare, for it was with one of a kindred, if not equal genius. Every night I retired with my mind filled with delightful recollections of the day, and every morning I rose with the certainty of new enjoyment. The days thus spent I shall ever look back to as among the very happiest of my life; for I was conscious at the time of being happy.

The only sad moment that I experienced at Abbotsford was that of my departure; but it was cheered with the prospect of soon returning: for I had promised, after making a tour in the Highlands, to come and pass a few more days on the banks of the Tweed, when Scott intended to invite Hogg the poet to meet me. I took a kind farewell of the family, with each of whom I had been highly pleased. If I

have refrained from dwelling particularly on their several characters, and giving anecdotes of them individually, it is because I consider them shielded by the sanctity of domestic life: Scott, on the contrary, belongs to history. As he accompanied me on foot, however, to a small gate on the confines of his premises, I could not refrain from expressing the enjoyment I had experienced in his domestic circle, and passing some warm eulogiums on the young folks from whom I had just parted. I shall never forget his reply. "They have kind hearts," said he, "and that is the main point as to human happiness. They love one another, poor things, which is everything in domestic life. The best wish I can make you, my friend," added he, laying his hand upon my shoulder, "is, that when you return to your own country, you may get married, and have a family of young bairns about you. If you are happy, there they are to share your happiness—and if you are otherwise, there they are to comfort you."

By this time we had reached the gate, when he halted, and took my hand. "I will not say farewell," said he, "for it is always a painful word; but I will say, Come again. When you have made your tour to the Highlands, come here and give me a few more days—but come when you please, you will always find Abbotsford open to you, and a hearty welcome."

I have thus given, in a rude style, my main recollections of what occurred during my sojourn at Abbotsford, and I feel mortified that I can give but such meagre, scattered, and colourless details of what was so copious, rich, and varied. During several days that I passed there, Scott was in admirable vein. From early morn until dinner-time he was rambling about, showing me the neighbourhood; and during dinner, and until late at night, engaged in social conversation. No time was reserved for himself; he seemed as if his only occupation was to entertain me; and yet I was almost an entire stranger to him,—one of whom he knew nothing, but an idle book I had written, and which, some years before, had amused him. But such was Scott—he appeared to have nothing to do but lavish his time, attention, and conversation on those around. It was difficult to imagine what time he

found to write those volumes that were incessantly issuing from the press; all of which, too, were of a nature to require reading and research. I could not find that his life was ever otherwise than a life of leisure and haphazard recreation, such as it was during my visit. He scarce ever balked a party of pleasure or a sporting excursion, and rarely pleaded his own concerns as an excuse for rejecting those of others. During my visit I heard of other visitors who had preceded me, and who must have kept him occupied for many days, and I have had an opportunity of knowing the course of his daily life for some time subsequently. Not long after my departure from Abbotsford, my friend Wilkie arrived there, to paint a picture of the Scott family. He found the house full of guests. Scott's whole time was taken up in riding and driving about the country, or in social conversation at home. "All this time," said Wilkie to me, "I did not presume to ask Mr. Scott to sit for his portrait, for I saw he had not a moment to spare; I waited for the guests to go away, but as fast as one went another arrived, and so it continued for several days, and with each set he was completely occupied. At length all went off, and we were quiet. I thought, however, Mr. Scott will now shut himself up among his books and papers, for he has to make up for lost time; it won't do for me to ask him now to sit for his picture. Laidlaw, who managed his estate, came in, and Scott turned to him, as I supposed, to consult about business. 'Laidlaw,' said he, 'to-morrow morning we'll go across the water, and take the dogs with us — there's a place where I think we shall be able to find a hare.'"

"In short," added Wilkie, "I found that instead of business he was thinking only of amusement, as if he had nothing in the world to occupy him; so I no longer feared to intrude upon him."

The conversation of Scott was frank, hearty, picturesque, and dramatic. During the time of my visit he inclined to the comic rather than the grave, in his anecdotes and stories; and such, I was told, was his general inclination. He relished a joke, or a trait of humour in social intercourse, and laughed with right good will. He talked not for effect, nor display, but from the flow of his spirits, the stores of his memory, and

the vigour of his imagination. He had a natural turn for narration, and his narratives and descriptions were without effort, yet wonderfully graphic. He placed the scene before you like a picture; he gave the dialogue with the appropriate dialect or peculiarities, and described the appearance and characters of his personages with that spirit and felicity evinced in his writings. Indeed, his conversation reminded me continually of his novels; and it seemed to me that, during the whole time I was with him, he talked enough to fill volumes, and that they could not have been filled more delightfully.

He was as good a listener as talker, appreciating every thing that others said, however humble might be their rank or pretensions, and was quick to testify his perception of any point in their discourse. He arrogated nothing to himself, but was perfectly unassuming and unpretending, entering with heart and soul into the business, or pleasure, or, I had almost said, folly, of the hour and the company. No one's concerns, no one's thoughts, no one's opinions, no one's tastes and pleasures, seemed beneath him. He made himself so thoroughly the companion of those with whom he happened to be, that they forgot for a time his vast superiority, and only recollected and wondered, when all was over, that it was Scott with whom they had been on such familiar terms, and in whose society they had felt so perfectly at their ease.

It was delightful to observe the generous spirit in which he spoke of all his literary contemporaries, quoting the beauties of their works; and this, too, with respect to persons with whom he might have been supposed to be at variance in literature or politics. Jeffrey, it was thought, had ruffled his plumes in one of his reviews, yet Scott spoke of him in terms of high and warm eulogy, both as an author and as a man.

His humour in conversation, as in his works, was genial and free from all causticity. He had a quick perception of faults and foibles, but he looked upon poor human nature with an indulgent eye, relishing what was good and pleasant, tolerating what was frail, and pitying what was evil. It is this beneficent spirit which gives such an air of *bonhomie* to Scott's humour throughout all his works. He played with the foibles and errors of his fellow-beings, and presented them in a

thousand whimsical and characteristic lights, but the kindness and generosity of his nature would not allow him to be a satirist. I do not recollect a sneer throughout his conversation any more than there is throughout his works.

Such is a rough sketch of Scott, as I saw him in private life, not merely at the time of the visit here narrated, but in the casual intercourse of subsequent years. Of his public character and merits all the world can judge. His works have incorporated themselves with the thoughts and concerns of the whole civilized world, for a quarter of a century, and have had a controlling influence over the age in which he lived. But when did a human being ever exercise an influence more salutary and benignant? Who is there that, on looking back over a great portion of his life, does not find the genius of Scott administering to his pleasures, beguiling his cares, and soothing his lonely sorrows? Who does not still regard his works as a treasury of pure enjoyment, an armory to which to resort in time of need, to find weapons with which to fight off the evils and the griefs of life? For my own part, in periods of dejection I have hailed the announcement of a new work from his pen as an earnest of certain pleasure in store for me, and have looked forward to it as a traveller in a waste looks to a green spot at a distance, where he feels assured of solace and refreshment. When I consider how much he has thus contributed to the better hours of my past existence, and how independent his works still make me, at times, of all the world for my enjoyment, I bless my stars that cast my lot in his days, to be thus cheered and gladdened by the outpourings of his genius. I consider it one of the greatest advantages that I have derived from my literary career, that it has elevated me into genial communion with such a spirit: and as a tribute of gratitude for his friendship, and veneration for his memory, I cast this humble stone upon his cairn, which will soon, I trust, be piled aloft with the contributions of abler hands

NEWSTEAD ABBEY.

HISTORICAL NOTICE.

BEING about to give a few sketches, taken during a three weeks' sojourn in the ancestral mansion of the late Lord Byron, I think it proper to premise some brief particulars concerning its history.

Newstead Abbey is one of the finest specimens in existence of those quaint and romantic piles, half castle, half convent, which remain as monuments of the olden times of England. It stands, too, in the midst of a legendary neighbourhood; being in the heart of Sherwood Forest, and surrounded by the haunts of Robin Hood and his band of outlaws, so famous in ancient ballad and nursery tale. It is true the forest scarcely exists but in name, and the tract of country over which it once extended its broad solitudes and shades is now an open and smiling region, cultivated with parks and farms, and enlivened with villages.

Newstead, which probably once exerted a monastic sway over this region, and controlled the consciences of the rude foresters, was originally a priory, founded in the latter part of the twelfth century by Henry II., at the time when he sought, by building of shrines and convents, and by other acts of external piety, to expiate the murder of Thomas à Becket. The priory was dedicated to God and the Virgin, and was inhabited by a fraternity of canons regular of St. Augustine. This order was originally simple and abstemious in its mode of living, and exemplary in its conduct; but it would seem that it gradually lapsed into those abuses which disgraced too many of the wealthy monastic establishments: for there are documents among its archives which intimate the prevalence of gross misrule and dissolute sensuality among its members

At the time of the dissolution of the convents during the reign of Henry VIII., Newstead underwent a sudden reverse, being given, with the neighbouring manor and rectory of Papelwick, to Sir John Byron, Steward of Manchester and Rochdale, and Lieutenant of Sherwood Forest. This ancient family worthy figures in the traditions of the Abbey, and in the ghost stories with which it abounds, under the quaint and graphic appellation of "Sir John Byron the Little with the great Beard." He converted the saintly edifice into a castellated dwelling, making it his favourite residence and the seat of his forest jurisdiction.

The Byron family being subsequently ennobled by a baronial title, and enriched by various possessions, maintained great style and retinue at Newstead. The proud edifice partook, however, of the vicissitudes of the times, and Lord Byron, in one of his poems, represents it as alternately the scene of lordly wassailing and of civil war:—

"Hark, how the hall resounding to the strain,
Shakes with the martial music's novel din!
The heralds of a warrior's haughty reign,
High crested banners, wave thy walls within.
Of changing sentinels the distant hum,
The mirth of feasts, the clang of burnish'd arms,
The braying trumpet, and the hoarser drum,
Unite in concert with increased alarms."

About the middle of the last century, the Abbey came into the possession of another noted character, who makes no less figure in its shadowy traditions than Sir John the Little with the great Beard. This was the grand-uncle of the poet, familiarly known among the gossiping chroniclers of the Abbey as "the Wicked Lord Byron." He is represented as a man of irritable passions and vindictive temper, in the indulgence of which an incident occurred which gave a turn to his whole character and life, and in some measure affected the fortunes of the Abbey. In his neighbourhood lived his kinsman and friend, Mr. Chaworth, proprietor of Annesley Hall. Being together in London in 1765, in a chamber of the Star and Garter tavern in Pall Mall, a quarrel arose between them. Byron insisted upon settling it upon the spot by single combat. They fought without seconds, by the dim light of a candle, and

Mr. Chaworth, although the most expert swordsman, received a mortal wound. With his dying breath he related such particulars of the contest as induced the coroner's jury to return a verdict of wilful murder. Lord Byron was sent to the Tower, and subsequently tried before the House of Peers, where an ultimate verdict was given of manslaughter.

He retired after this to the Abbey, where he shut himself up to brood over his disgraces; grew gloomy, morose, and fantastical, and indulged in fits of passion and caprice that made him the theme of rural wonder and scandal. No tale was too wild or too monstrous for vulgar belief. Like his successor the poet he was accused of all kinds of vagaries and wickedness. It was said that he always went armed, as if prepared to commit murder on the least provocation. At one time, when a gentleman of his neighbourhood was to dine *tête-à-tête* with him, it is said a brace of pistols were gravely laid with the knives and forks upon the table, as part of the regular table furniture, and implements that might be needed in the course of the repast. Another rumour states, that being exasperated at his coachman for disobedience to orders, he shot him on the spot, threw his body into the coach where Lady Byron was seated, and, mounting the box, officiated in his stead. At another time, according to the same vulgar rumours, he threw her ladyship into the lake in front of the Abbey, where she would have been drowned but for the timely aid of the gardener. These stories are doubtless exaggerations of trivial incidents which may have occurred; but it is certain that the wayward passions of this unhappy man caused a separation from his wife, and finally spread a solitude around him. Being displeased at the marriage of his son and heir, he displayed an inveterate malignity towards him. Not being able to cut off his succession to the Abbey estate, which descended to him by entail, he endeavoured to injure it as much as possible, so that it might come a mere wreck into his hands. For this purpose he suffered the Abbey to fall out of repair, and everything to go to waste about it, and cut down all the timber on the estate, laying low many a tract of old Sherwood Forest, so that the Abbey lands lay stript and bare of all their ancient honours. He was baffled in his unnatural revenge by the premature death of his son, and passed the

remainder of his days in his deserted and dilapidated halls, a gloomy misanthrope, brooding amidst the scenes he had laid desolate

His wayward humours drove from him all neighbourly society, and for a part of the time he was almost without domestics. In his misanthropic mood, when at variance with all human kind, he took to feeding crickets, so that in process of time the Abbey was overrun with them, and its lonely halls made more lonely at night by their monotonous music. Tradition adds that, at his death, the crickets seemed aware that they had lost their patron and protector, for they one and all packed up bag and baggage and left the Abbey, trooping across its courts and corridors in all directions.

The death of the "Old Lord," or "the Wicked Lord Byron," for he is known by both appellations, occurred in 1798, and the Abbey then passed into the possession of the poet. The latter was but eleven years of age, and living in humble style with his mother in Scotland. They came soon after to England to take possession. Moore gives a simple but striking anecdote of the first arrival of the poet at the domains of his ancestors.

They had arrived at the Newstead toll-bar, and saw the woods of the Abbey stretching out to receive them, when Mrs. Byron, affecting to be ignorant of the place, asked the woman of the toll-house to whom that seat belonged? She was told that the owner of it, Lord Byron, had been some months dead. "And who is the next heir?" asked the proud and happy mother. "They say," answered the old woman, "it is a little boy who lives at Aberdeen." "And this is he, bless him!" exclaimed the nurse, no longer able to contain herself, and turning to kiss with delight the young lord who was seated on her lap.*

During Lord Byron's minority, the Abbey was let to Lord Grey de Ruthyn; but the poet visited it occasionally during the Harrow vocations, when he resided with his mother at lodgings in Nottingham. It was treated little better by its present tenant than by the old lord who preceded him; so that when, in the autumn of 1808, Lord Byron took up his

* Moore's Life of Lord Byron.

abode there, it was in a ruinous condition. The following lines from his own pen may give some idea of its condition :—

“Through thy baullements, Newstead, the hollow winds whistle,
 Thou, the hall of my fathers, art gone to decay;
 In thy once smiling garden the hemlock and thistle
 Have choked up the rose which once bloomed in the way.
 Of the mail-covered barons who, proudly, to battle,
 Led thy vassals from Europe to Palestine's plain,
 The escutcheon and shield, which with every wind rattle,
 Are the only sad vestiges now that remain.”*

In another poem he expresses the melancholy feeling with which he took possession of his ancestral mansion :—

“Newstead ! what saddening scene of change is thine !
 Thy yawning arch betokens sure decay :
 The last and youngest of a noble line
 Now holds thy mouldering turrets in his sway,
 Deserted now, he scans thy grey-worn towers,
 Thy vaults, where dead of feudal ages sleep,
 Thy cloisters, pervious to the wintry showers,
 These—these he views, and views them but to weep.
 Yet he prefers thee to the gilded domes,
 Or gewgaw grottoes of the vainly great ;
 Yet lingers mid thy damp and mossy tombs,
 Nor breathes a murmur 'gainst the will of fate.”†

Lord Byron had not fortune sufficient to put the pile in extensive repair, nor to maintain anything like the state of his ancestors. He restored some of the apartments, so as to furnish his mother with a comfortable habitation, and fitted up a quaint study for himself, in which, among books and busts, and other library furniture, were two skulls of the ancient friars, grinning on each side of an antique cross. One of his gay companions gives a picture of Newstead when thus repaired, and the picture is sufficiently desolate.

“There are two tiers of cloisters, with a variety of cells and rooms about them, which, though not inhabited, nor in an inhabitable state, might easily be made so ; and many of the original rooms, among which is a fine stone hall, are still in use. Of the Abbey church, one end only remains ; and the old kitchen, with a long range of apartments, is reduced to a heap of rubbish. Leading from the Abbey to the modern

* Lines on leaving Newstead Abbey.

† Elegy on Newstead Abbey.

part of the habitation is a noble room, seventy feet in length and twenty-three in breadth; but every part of the house displays neglect and decay, save those which the present lord has lately fitted up.*

Even the repairs thus made were but of transient benefit, for the roof being left in its dilapidated state, the rain soon penetrated into the apartments which Lord Byron had restored and decorated, and in a few years rendered them almost as desolate as the rest of the Abbey.

Still he felt a pride in the ruinous old edifice; its very dreary and dismantled state addressed itself to his poetical imagination, and to that love of the melancholy and the grand which is evinced in all his writings. "Come what may," said he in one of his letters, "Newstead and I stand or fall together. I have now lived on the spot. I have fixed my heart upon it, and no pressure, present or future, shall induce me to barter the last vestige of our inheritance. I have that pride within me which will enable me to support difficulties: could I obtain in exchange for Newstead Abbey the first fortune in the country, I would reject the proposition."

His residence at the Abbey, however, was fitful and uncertain. He passed occasional portions of time there, sometimes studiously and alone, oftener idly and recklessly, and occasionally with young and gay companions, in riot and revelry, and the indulgence of all kinds of mad caprice. The Abbey was by no means benefitted by these roystering inmates, who sometimes played off monkish mummeries about the cloisters, at other times turned the state chambers into schools for boxing and single-stick, and shot pistols in the great hall. The country people of the neighbourhood were as much puzzled by these madcap vagaries of the new incumbent as by the gloomier habits of the "Old Lord," and began to think that madness was inherent in the Byron race, or that some wayward star ruled over the Abbey.

It is needless to enter into a detail of the circumstances which led his Lordship to sell his ancestral estate, notwithstanding the partial predilections and hereditary feeling which he had so eloquently expressed. Fortunately it fell into the hands of a man who possessed something of a poetical tem-

* Letter of the late Charles Skinner Mathews, Esq.

perament, and who cherished an enthusiastic admiration for Lord Byron. Colonel (at that time Major) Wildman had been a schoolmate of the poet, and sat with him on the same form at Harrow. He had subsequently distinguished himself in the war of the Peninsula, and at the battle of Waterloo, and it was a great consolation to Lord Byron, in parting with his family estate, to know that it would be held by one capable of restoring its faded glories, and who would respect and preserve all the monuments and memorials of his line.*

The confidence of Lord Byron in the good feeling and good taste of Colonel Wildman has been justified by the event. Under his judicious eye and munificent hand the venerable and romantic pile has risen from its ruins in all its old monastic and baronial splendour, and additions have been made to it in perfect conformity of style. The groves and forests have been replanted; the lakes and fish-ponds cleaned out, and the gardens rescued from the "hemlock and thistle," and restored to their pristine and dignified formality.

The farms on the estate have been put in complete order,

* The following letter, written in the course of the transfer of the estate, has never been published:—

Venice, Nov. 18, 1818.

MY DEAR WILDMAN,

Mr. Hanson is on the eve of his return, so that I have only time to return a few inadequate thanks for your very kind letter. I should regret to trouble you with any requests of mine, in regard to the preservation of any signs of my family, which may still exist at Newstead, and leave every thing of that kind to your own feelings, present or future, upon the subject. The portrait which you flatter me by desiring would not be worth to you your trouble and expense of such an expedition, but you may rely upon having the very first that may be painted, and which may seem worth your acceptance.

I trust that Newstead will, being yours, remain so, and that it may see you as happy, as I am very sure that you will make your dependants. With regard to myself, you may be sure that whether in the fourth, or fifth, or sixth form at Harrow, or in the fluctuations of after life, I shall always remember with regard my old schoolfellow—fellow monitor, and friend, and recognise with respect the gallant soldier, who, with all the advantages of fortune and allurements of youth to a life of pleasure, devoted himself to duties of a nobler order, and will receive his reward in the esteem and admiration of his country.

Ever yours most truly and affectionately,

BYRON.

new farmhouses built of stone, in the picturesque and comfortable style of the old English granges; the hereditary tenants secured in their paternal homes, and treated with the most considerate indulgence: everything, in a word, gives happy indications of a liberal and beneficent landlord.

What most, however, will interest the visitors to the Abbey in favour of its present occupant, is the reverential care with which he has preserved and renovated every monument and relic of the Byron family, and every object in any wise connected with the memory of the poet. Eighty thousand pounds have already been expended upon the venerable pile, yet the work is still going on, and Newstead promises to realize the hope faintly breathed by the poet when bidding it a melancholy farewell—

“Haply thy sun emerging, yet may shine,
Thee to irradiate with meridian ray;
Hours splendid as the past may still be thine,
And bless thy future, as thy former day.”

ARRIVAL AT THE ABBEY.

I HAD been passing a merry Christmas in the good old style at Barlboro' Hall, a venerable family mansion in Derbyshire, and set off to finish the holidays with the hospitable proprietor of Newstead Abbey. A drive of seventeen miles through a pleasant country, part of it the storied region of Sherwood Forest, brought me to the gate of Newstead Park. The aspect of the park was by no means imposing, the fine old trees that once adorned it having been laid low by Lord Byron's wayward predecessor.

Entering the gate, the postchaise rolled heavily along a sandy road, between naked declivities, gradually descending into one of those gentle and sheltered valleys, in which the sleek monks of old loved to nestle themselves. Here a sweep of the road round an angle of a garden wall brought us full in front of the venerable edifice, embosomed in the valley, with a beautiful sheet of water spreading out before it

The irregular grey pile of motley architecture answered to the description given by Lord Byron :

"An old, old monastery once, and now
Still older mansion, of a rich and rare
Mixed Gothic——"

One end was fortified by a castellated tower, bespeaking the baronial and warlike days of the edifice; the other end maintained its primitive monastic character. A ruined chapel, flanked by a solemn grove, still reared its front entire. It is true, the threshold of the once frequented portal was grass-grown, and the great lancet window, once glorious with painted glass, was now entwined and overhung with ivy; but the old convent cross still braved both time and tempest on the pinnacle of the chapel, and below, the blessed effigies of the Virgin and child, sculptured in grey stone, remained uninjured in their niche, giving a sanctified aspect to the pile.*

A flight of rooks, tenants of the adjacent grove, were hovering about the ruin and balancing themselves upon every airy projection, and looked down with curious eye and cawed as the postchaise rattled along below.

The chamberlain of the Abbey, a most decorous personage, dressed in black, received us at the portal. Here, too, we encountered a memento of Lord Byron, a great black and white Newfoundland dog, that had accompanied his remains from Greece. He was descended from the famous Boatswain, and inherited his generous qualities. He was a cherished inmate of the Abbey, and honoured and caressed by every visitor. Conducted by the chamberlain, and followed by the dog, who assisted in doing the honours of the house, we passed through a long low-vaulted hall, supported by massive Gothic arches, and not a little resembling the crypt of a cathedral, being the basement story of the Abbey.

From this we ascended a stone staircase, at the head of

* "—— in a higher niche, alone, but crown'd,
The Virgin Mother of the God-born child,
With her son in her blessed arms, looked round,
Spared by some chance, when all beside was spoil'd:
She made the earth below seem holy ground."

Don Juan, Canto III.

which a pair of folding-doors admitted us into a broad corridor that ran round the interior of the Abbey. The windows of the corridor looked into a quadrangular grass-grown court, forming the hollow centre of the pile. In the midst of it rose a lofty and fantastic fountain, wrought of the same grey stone as the main edifice, and which has been well described by Lord Byron:—

“ Amidst the court a Gothic fountain play’d,
Symmetrical, but deck’d with carvings quaint,
Strange faces, like to men in masquerade,
And here perhaps a monster, there a saint.
The spring rush’d through grim mouths of granite made,
And sparkled into basins, where it spent
Its little torrent in a thousand bubbles,
Like man’s vain glory, and his vainer troubles.”*

Around this quadrangle were low-vaulted cloisters, with Gothic arches, once the secluded walks of the monks: the corridor along which we were passing was built above these cloisters, and their hollow arches seemed to reverberate every footfall. Everything thus far had a solemn monastic air; but, on arriving at an angle of the corridor, the eye, glancing along a shadowy gallery, caught a sight of two dark figures in plate armour, with closed visors, bucklers braced, and swords drawn, standing motionless against the wall. They seemed two phantoms of the chivalrous era of the Abbey.

Here the chamberlain, throwing open a folding-door, ushered us at once into a spacious and lofty saloon, which offered a brilliant contrast to the quaint and sombre apartments we had traversed. It was elegantly furnished, and the walls hung with paintings, yet something of its original architecture had been preserved and blended with modern embellishments. There were the stone-shafted casements and the deep bow-window of former times. The carved and panelled wood-work of the lofty ceiling had likewise been carefully restored, and its Gothic and grotesque devices painted and gilded in their ancient style.

Here, too, were emblems of the former and latter days of the Abbey, in the effigies of the first and last of the Byron line that held sway over its destinies. At the upper end of

* Don Juan, Canto III.

the saloon, above the door, the dark Gothic portrait of "Sir John Byron the Little with the great Beard," looked grimly down from his canvass, while, at the opposite end, a white marble bust of the *genius loci*, the noble poet, shone conspicuously from its pedestal.

The whole air and style of the apartment partook more of the palace than the monastery, and its windows looked forth on a suitable prospect, composed of beautiful groves, smooth verdant lawns, and silver sheets of water. Below the windows was a small flower-garden, inclosed by stone balustrades, on which were stately peacocks, sunning themselves and displaying their plumage. About the grass-plots in front were gay cock pheasants and plump partridges, and nimble-footed water-hens, feeding almost in perfect security.

Such was the medley of objects presented to the eye on first visiting the Abbey, and I found the interior fully to answer the description of the poet:—

"The mansion's self was vast and venerable,
 With more of the monastic than has been
 Elsewhere preserved; the cloisters still were stable,
 The cells, too, and refectory, I ween;
 An exquisite small chapel had been able,
 Still unimpair'd, to decorate the scene;
 The rest had been reformed, replaced, or sunk,
 And spoke more of the friar than the monk.
 Huge halls, long galleries, spacious chambers, joined
 By no quite lawful marriage of the arts,
 Might shock a connoisseur; but when combined
 Formed a whole, which, irregular in parts,
 Yet left a grand impression on the mind,
 At least of those whose eyes were in their hearts."

It is not my intention to lay open the scenes of domestic life at the Abbey, nor to describe the festivities of which I was a partaker during my sojourn within its hospitable walls. I wish merely to present a picture of the edifice itself, and of those personages and circumstances about it connected with the memory of Byron.

I forbear, therefore, to dwell on my reception by my excellent and amiable host and hostess, or to make my reader acquainted with the elegant inmates of the mansion that I met in the saloon; and I shall pass on at once with him to

the chamber allotted me, and to which I was most respectfully conducted by the chamberlain.

It was one of a magnificent suite of rooms, extending between the court of the cloisters and the Abbey garden, the windows looking into the latter. The whole suite formed the ancient state apartment, and had fallen into decay during the neglected days of the Abbey, so as to be in a ruinous condition in the time of Lord Byron. It had since been restored to its ancient splendour, of which my chamber may be cited as a specimen. It was lofty and well proportioned; the lower part of the walls was panelled with ancient oak, the upper part hung with Gobelin tapestry, representing oriental hunting scenes, wherein the figures were of the size of life, and of great vivacity of attitude and colour.

The furniture was antique, dignified, and cumbrous. High-backed chairs, curiously carved and wrought in needlework; a massive clothes-press of dark oak, well polished, and inlaid with landscapes of various tinted woods; a bed of state, ample and lofty, so as only to be ascended by a movable flight of steps, the huge posts supporting a high tester with a tuft of crimson plumes at each corner, and rich curtains of crimson damask hanging in broad and heavy folds.

A venerable mirror of plate glass stood on the toilet, in which belles of former centuries may have contemplated and decorated their charms. The floor of the chamber was of tessellated oak, shining with wax, and partly covered by a Turkey carpet. In the centre stood a massy oaken table, waxed and polished as smooth as glass, and furnished with a writing-desk of perfumed rosewood.

A sober light was admitted into the room through Gothic stone-shafted casements, partly shaded by crimson curtains, and partly overshadowed by the trees of the garden. This solemnly tempered light added to the effect of the stately and antiquated interior.

Two portraits, suspended over the doors, were in keeping with the scene. They were in ancient Vandyke dresses; one was a cavalier, who may have occupied this apartment in days of yore, the other was a lady with a black velvet mask in her hand, who may once have arrayed herself for conquest at the very mirror I have described.

The most curious relic of old times, however, in this quaint but richly light apartment, was a great chimneypiece of panel work, carved in high relief, with niches or compartments, each containing a human bust, that protruded almost entirely from the wall. Some of the figures were in ancient Gothic garb; the most striking among them was a female, who was earnestly regarded by a fierce Saracen from an adjoining niche.

This panel-work is among the mysteries of the Abbey, and causes as much wide speculation as the Egyptian hieroglyphics. Some suppose it to illustrate an adventure in the Holy Land, and that the lady in effigy had been rescued by some crusader of the family from the turbaned Turk who watches her so earnestly. What tends to give weight to these suppositions is, that similar pieces of panel-work exist in other parts of the Abbey, in all of which are to be seen the Christian lady and her Saracen guardian or lover. At the bottom of these sculptures are emblazoned the armorial bearings of the Byrons.

I shall not detain the reader, however, with any further description of my apartment, or of the mysteries connected with it. As he is to pass some days with me at the Abbey, we shall have time to examine the old edifice at our leisure, and to make ourselves acquainted, not merely with its interior, but likewise with its environs.

THE ABBEY GARDEN.

THE morning after my arrival, I rose at an early hour. The daylight was peering brightly between the window-curtains, and drawing them apart, I gazed through the Gothic casement upon a scene that accorded in character with the interior of the ancient mansion. It was the old Abbey garden, but altered to suit the tastes of different times and occupants. In one direction were shady walks and alleys, broad terraces and lofty groves; in another, beneath a grey monastic-looking angle of the edifice, overrun with ivy and surmounted by a cross, lay a small French garden, with formal flower-pots, gravelled walks, and stately stone balustrades.

The beauty of the morning, and the quiet of the hour,

tempted me to an early stroll; for it is pleasant to enjoy such old-time places alone, when one may indulge poetical raveries and spin cobweb fancies without interruption. Dressing myself, therefore, with all speed, I descended a small flight of steps from the state apartment into the long corridor over the cloisters, along which I passed to a door at the farther end. Here I emerged into the open air, and, descending another flight of stone steps, found myself in the centre of what had once been the Abbey chapel.

Nothing of the sacred edifice remained, however, but the Gothic front, with its deep portal and grand lancet window, already described. The nave, the side-walls, the choir, the sacristy, all had disappeared. The open sky was over my head, a smooth shaven grass-plot beneath my feet. Gravel walks and shrubberies had succeeded to the shadowy aisles, and stately trees to the clustering columns.

“Where now the grass exhales a murky dew,
The humid pall of life-extinguished clay,
In sainted fame the sacred fathers grew,
Nor raised their pious voices but to pray.
Where now the bats their wavering wings extend,
Soon as the gloaming spreads her warning shade,
The choir did oft their mingling vespers blend,
Or matin orisons to Mary paid.”

Instead of the matin orisons of the monks, however, the ruined walls of the chapel now resounded to the cawing of innumerable rooks that were fluttering and hovering about the dark grove which they inhabited, and preparing for their morning flight.

My ramble led me along quiet alleys, bordered by shrubbery, where the solitary water-hen would now and then scud across my path, and take refuge among the bushes. From hence I entered upon a broad terraced walk, once a favourite resort of the friars, which extended the whole length of the old Abbey garden, passing along the ancient stone wall which bounded it. In the centre of the garden lay one of the monkish fish-pools, an oblong sheet of water, deep set like a mirror, in green sloping banks of turf. In its glassy bosom was reflected the dark mass of a neighbouring grove, one of the most important features of the garden.

This grove goes by the sinister name of "The Devil's Wood," and enjoys but an equivocal character in the neighbourhood. It was planted by "the Wicked Lord Byron," during the early part of his residence at the Abbey, before his fatal duel with Mr. Chaworth. Having something of a foreign and classical taste, he set up leaden statues of satyrs or fawns at each end of the grove. The statues, like everything else about the old Lord, fell under the suspicion and obloquy that overshadowed him in the latter part of his life. The country people, who knew nothing of heathen mythology and its sylvan deities, looked with horror at idols invested with the diabolical attributes of horns and cloven feet. They probably supposed them some object of secret worship of the gloomy and secluded misanthrope and reputed murderer, and gave them the name of "The old Lord's Devils."

I penetrated the recesses of the mystic grove. There stood the ancient and much-slandered statues, overshadowed by tall larches, and stained by dank green mould. It is not a matter of surprise that strange figures, thus behoofted and behorned, and set up in a gloomy grove, should perplex the minds of the simple and superstitious yeomanry. There are many of the tastes and caprices of the rich, that in the eyes of the uneducated must savour of insanity.

I was attracted to this grove, however, by memorials of a more touching character. It had been one of the favourite haunts of the late Lord Byron. In his farewell visit to the Abbey, after he had parted with the possession of it, he passed some time in this grove in company with his sister, and as a last memento, engraved their names on the bark of a tree.

The feelings that agitated his bosom during this farewell visit, when he beheld around him objects dear to his pride and dear to his juvenile recollections, but of which the narrowness of his fortune would not permit him to retain possession, may be gathered from a passage in a poetical epistle, written to his sister in after years :—

"I did remind you of our own dear lake
By the old hall, *which may be mine no more* :
Leman's is fair ; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore :

Sad havoc Time must with my memory make
Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before;
Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
Resign'd for ever, or divided far.

I feel almost at times as I have felt
In happy childhood: trees, and flowers, and brooks,
Which do remember me of where I dwelt
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,
Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
My heart with recognition of their looks;
And even at moments I would think I see
Some living things I love—but none like thee."

I searched the grove for some time before I found the tree on which Lord Byron had left his frail memorial. It was an elm of peculiar form, having two trunks, which sprang from the same root, and, after growing side by side, mingled their branches together. He had selected it, doubtless, as emblematical of his sister and himself. The names of BYRON and AUGUSTA were still visible. They had been deeply cut in the bark, but the natural growth of the tree was gradually rendering them illegible, and a few years hence, strangers will seek in vain for this record of fraternal affection.

Leaving the grove, I continued my ramble along a spacious terrace, overlooking what had once been the kitchen-garden of the Abbey. Below me lay the monks' stew, or fish-pond, a dark pool, overhung by gloomy cypresses, with a solitary water-hen swimming about in it.

A little further on, and the terrace looked down upon the stately scene on the south-side of the Abbey; the flower-garden, with its stone balustrades and stately peacocks, the lawn, with its pheasants and partridges, and the soft valley of Newstead beyond.

At a distance on the border of the lawn stood another memento of Lord Byron—an oak planted by him in his boyhood, on his first visit to the Abbey. With a superstitious feeling inherent in him, he linked his own destiny with that of the tree. "As it fares," said he, "so will fare my fortunes." Several years elapsed, many of them passed in idleness and dissipation. He returned to the Abbey, a youth scarce grown to manhood, but, as he thought, with vices and follies beyond his years. He found his emblem oak almost

choked by weeds and brambles, and took the lesson to himself.

"Young oak, when I planted thee deep in the ground,
I hoped that thy days would be longer than mine,
That thy dark waving branches would flourish around,
And ivy thy trunk with its mantle entwine.

Such, such was my hope—when in infancy's years
On the land of my fathers I reared thee with pride;
They are past, and I water thy stem with my tears—
Thy decay not the weeds that surround thee can hide."

I leaned over the stone balustrades of the terrace, and gazed upon the valley of Newstead, with its silver sheets of water gleaming in the morning sun. It was a Sabbath morning, which always seems to have a hallowed influence over the landscape, probably from the quiet of the day, and the cessation of all kinds of week-day labour. As I mused upon the mild and beautiful scene, and the wayward destinies of the man whose stormy temperament forced him from this tranquil paradise to battle with the passions and perils of the world, the sweet chime of bells from a village a few miles distant came stealing up the valley. Every sight and sound this morning seemed calculated to summon up touching recollections of poor Byron. The chime was from the village spire of Hucknall Torkard, beneath which his remains lie buried!

— I have since visited his tomb. It is in an old grey country church, venerable with the lapse of centuries. He lies buried beneath the pavement, at one end of the principal aisle. A light falls on the spot through the stained glass of a Gothic window, and a tablet on the adjacent wall announces the family vault of the Byrons. It had been the wayward intention of the poet to be entombed, with his faithful dog, in the monument erected by him in the garden of Newstead Abbey. His executors showed better judgment and feeling in consigning his ashes to the family sepulchre, to mingle with those of his mother and his kindred. Here,

"After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well.
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further!"

How nearly did his dying hour realise the wish made by him, but a few years previously, in one of his fitful moods of melancholy and misanthropy :

“ When time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
Oblivion ! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o’er my dying bed !
No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep or wish the coming blow :
No maiden with dishevelled hair,
To feel or feign decorous woe.
But silent let me sink to earth,
With no officious mourners near :
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a tear.”

He died among strangers in a foreign land, without a kindred hand to close his eyes ; yet he did not die unwept. With all his faults and errors, and passions and caprices, he had the gift of attaching his humble dependants warmly to him. One of them, a poor Greek, accompanied his remains to England, and followed them to the grave. I am told that, during the ceremony, he stood holding on by a pew in an agony of grief, and when all was over, seemed as if he would have gone down into the tomb with the body of his master. A nature that could inspire such attachments must have been generous and beneficent.

PLOUGH MONDAY.

SHERWOOD FOREST is a region that still retains much of the quaint customs and holiday games of the olden time. A day or two after my arrival at the Abbey, as I was walking in the cloisters, I heard the sound of rustic music, and now and then a burst of merriment, proceeding from the interior of the mansion. Presently the chamberlain came and informed me that a party of country lads were in the servants’ hall, performing Plough Monday antics, and invited me to witness their mummary. I gladly assented, for I am somewhat cu-

rious about these relics of popular usages. The servants' hall was a fit place for the exhibition of an old Gothic game. It was a chamber of great extent, which in monkish times had been the refectory of the Abbey. A row of massive columns extended lengthwise through the centre, whence sprung Gothic arches, supporting the low vaulted ceiling. Here was a set of rustics dressed up in something of the style represented in the books concerning popular antiquities. One was in a rough garb of frieze, with his head muffled in bearskin, and a bell dangling behind him, that jingled at every movement. He was the clown, or fool of the party, probably a traditional representative of the ancient satyr. The rest were decorated with ribands and armed with wooden swords. The leader of the troop recited the old ballad of St. George and the Dragon, which had been current among the country people for ages; his companions accompanied the recitation with some rude attempt at acting, while the clown cut all kinds of antics.

To these succeeded a set of morris-dancers, gaily dressed up with ribands and hawks'-bells. In this troop we had Robin Hood and Maid Marian, the latter represented by a smooth-faced boy: also, Beelzebub, equipped with a broom, and accompanied by his wife Bessy, a termagant old beldam. These rude pageants are the lingering remains of the old customs of Plough Monday, when bands of rustics, fantastically dressed, and furnished with pipe and tabor, dragged what was called the "fool plough" from house to house, singing ballads and performing antics, for which they were rewarded with money and good cheer.

But it is not in "merry Sherwood Forest" alone that these remnants of old times prevail. They are to be met with in most of the counties north of the Trent, which classic stream seems to be the boundary line of primitive customs. During my recent Christmas sojourn at Barlboro' Hall, on the skirts of Derbyshire and Yorkshire, I had witnessed many of the rustic festivities peculiar to that joyous season, which have rashly been pronounced obsolete by those who draw their experience merely from city life. I had seen the great Yule log put on the fire on Christmas eve, and the wassail bowl sent round, brimming with its spiey beverage. I had heard

carols beneath my window by the choristers of the neighbouring village, who went their rounds about the ancient Hall at midnight, according to immemorial custom. We had mummers and mimers too, with the story of St. George and the Dragon, and other ballads and traditional dialogues, together with the famous old interlude of the Hobby Horse; all represented in the antechamber and servants' hall by rustics, who inherited the custom and the poetry from preceding generations.

The boar's head, crowned with rosemary, had taken its honoured station among the Christmas cheer; the festal board had been attended by glee singers and minstrels from the village, to entertain the company with hereditary songs and catches during their repast; and the old Pyrrhic game of the sword dance, handed down since the time of the Romans, was admirably performed in the court-yard of the mansion by a band of young men, lithe and supple in their forms and graceful in their movements, who, I was told, went the rounds of the villages and country seats during the Christmas holidays.

I specify these rural pageants and ceremonials, which I saw during my sojourn in this neighbourhood, because it has been deemed that some of the anecdotes of holiday customs given in my preceding writings related to usages which have entirely passed away. Critics who reside in cities have little idea of the primitive manners and observances, which still prevail in remote and rural neighbourhoods.

In fact, in crossing the Trent one seems to step back into old times; and in the villages of Sherwood Forest we are in a black-letter region. The moss-green cottages, the lowly mansions of grey stone, the Gothic crosses at each end of the villages, and the tall Maypole in the centre, transport us in imagination to foregone centuries; everything has a quaint and antiquated air.

The tenantry on the Abbey estate partake of this primitive character. Some of the families have rented farms there for nearly three hundred years; and, notwithstanding that their mansions fell to decay, and everything about them partook of the general waste and misrule of the Byron dynasty, yet nothing could uproot them from their native soil. I am

happy to say, that Colonel Wildman has taken these stanch loyal families under his peculiar care. He has favoured them in their rents, repaired, or rather rebuilt their farmhouses, and has enabled families that had almost sunk into the class of mere rustic labourers, once more to hold up their heads among the yeomanry of the land.

I visited one of these renovated establishments that had but lately been a mere ruin, and now was a substantial grange. It was inhabited by a young couple. The good woman showed every part of the establishment with decent pride, exulting in its comfort and respectability. Her husband, I understood, had risen in consequence with the improvement of his mansion, and now began to be known among his rustic neighbours by the appellation of "the young Squire."

OLD SERVANTS.

In an old, time-worn, and mysterious-looking mansion like Newstead Abbey, and one so haunted by monkish and feudal and poetical associations, it is a prize to meet with some ancient crone, who has passed a long life about the place, so as to have become a living chronicle of its fortunes and vicissitudes. Such a one is Nanny Smith, a worthy dame, near seventy years of age, who for a long time served as housekeeper to the Byrons. The Abbey and its domains comprise her world, beyond which she knows nothing, but within which she has ever conducted herself with native shrewdness and old-fashioned honesty. When Lord Byron sold the Abbey her vocation was at an end, still she lingered about the place, having for it the local attachment of a cat. Abandoning her comfortable housekeeper's apartment, she took shelter in one of the "rock houses," which are nothing more than a little neighbourhood of cabins, excavated in the perpendicular walls of a stone quarry, at no great distance from the Abbey. Three cells cut in the living rock formed her dwelling; these she fitted up humbly but comfortably; her son William la-

boured in the neighbourhood, and aided to support her, and Nanny Smith maintained a cheerful aspect and an independent spirit. One of her gossips suggested to her that William should marry, and bring home a young wife to help her and take care of her. "Nay, nay," replied Nanny tartly, "I want no young mistress in *my house*." So much for the love of rule—poor Nanny's house was a hole in the rock!

Colonel Wildman, on taking possession of the Abbey, found Nanny Smith thus humbly nestled. With that active benevolence which characterises him, he immediately set William up in a small farm on the estate, where Nanny Smith has a comfortable mansion in her old days. Her pride is roused by her son's advancement. She remarks with exultation that people treat William with much more respect now that he is a farmer, than they did when he was a labourer. A farmer of the neighbourhood has even endeavoured to make a match between him and his sister, but Nanny Smith has grown fastidious, and interfered. The girl, she said, was too old for her son; besides, she did not see that he was in any need of a wife.

"No," said William, "I ha' no great mind to marry the wench; but if the Colonel and his lady wish it, I am willing. They have been so kind to me that I should think it my duty to please them." The Colonel and his lady, however, have not thought proper to put honest William's gratitude to so severe a test.

Another worthy whom Colonel Wildman found vegetating upon the place, and who had lived there for at least sixty years, was old Joe Murray. He had come there when a mere boy in the train of the "old Lord," about the middle of the last century, and had continued with him until his death. Having been a cabin-boy when very young, Joe always fancied himself a bit of a sailor, and had charge of all the pleasure-boats on the lake, though he afterwards rose to the dignity of butler. In the latter days of the old Lord Byron, when he shut himself up from all the world, Joe Murray was the only servant retained by him, excepting his housekeeper, Betty Hardstaff, who was reputed to have an undue sway over him, and was derisively called "Lady Betty" among the country folk.

When the Abbey came into the possession of the late Lord Byron, Joe Murray accompanied it as a fixture. He was reinstated as butler in the Abbey, and high-admiral on the lake, and his sturdy, honest, mastiff qualities, won so upon Lord Byron as even to rival his Newfoundland dog in his affections. Often when dining, he would pour out a bumper of choice Madeira, and hand it to Joe as he stood behind his chair. In fact, when he built the monumental tomb which stands in the Abbey garden, he intended it for himself, Joe Murray, and the dog. The two latter were to lie on each side of him. Boat-swain died not long afterwards, and was regularly interred, and the well-known epitaph inscribed on one side of the monument. Lord Byron departed for Greece; during his absence, a gentleman to whom Joe Murray was showing the tomb, observed, "Well, old boy, you will take your place here some twenty years hence."

"I don't know that, sir," growled Joe, in reply; "if I was sure his Lordship would come here, I should like it well enough, but I should not like to lie alone with the dog."

Joe Murray was always extremely neat in his dress and attentive to his person, and made a most respectable appearance. A portrait of him still hangs in the Abbey, representing him a hale, fresh-looking fellow, in a flaxen wig, a blue coat and buff waistcoat, with a pipe in his hand. He discharged all the duties of his station with great fidelity, unquestionable honesty, and much outward decorum, but, if we may believe his contemporary, Nanny Smith, who, as house-keeper, shared the sway of the household with him, he was very lax in his minor morals, and used to sing loose and profane songs as he presided at the table in the servants' hall, or sat taking his ale and smoking his pipe by the evening fire. Joe had evidently derived his convivial notions from the race of English country squires who flourished in the days of his juvenility. Nanny Smith was scandalized at his ribald songs, but being above harm herself, endured them in silence. At length, on his singing them before a young girl of sixteen, she could contain herself no longer, but read him a lecture that made his ears ring, and then flounced off to bed. The lecture seems, by her account, to have staggered Joe, for he told her the next morning that he had had a terrible dream in the

night. An Evangelist stood at the foot of his bed with a great Dutch Bible, which he held with the printed part towards him, and after a while pushed it in his face. Nanny Smith undertook to interpret the vision, and read from it such a homily, and deduced such awful warnings, that Joe became quite serious, left off singing, and took to reading good books for a month; but after that, continued Nanny, he relapsed and became as bad as ever, and continued to sing loose and profane songs to his dying day.

When Colonel Wildman became proprietor of the Abbey he found Joe Murray flourishing in a green old age, though upwards of fourscore, and continued him in his station as butler. The old man was rejoiced at the extensive repairs that were immediately commenced, and anticipated with pride the day when the Abbey should rise out of its ruins with renovated splendour, its gates be thronged with trains and equipages, and its halls once more echo to the sound of joyous hospitality.

What chiefly, however, concerned Joe's pride and ambition, was a plan of the Colonel's to have the ancient refectory of the convent, a great vaulted room, supported by Gothic columns, converted into a servants' hall. Here Joe looked forward to rule the roast at the head of the servants' table, and to make the Gothic arches ring with those hunting and hard-drinking ditties which were the horror of the discreet Nanny Smith. Time, however, was fast wearing away with him, and his great fear was that the hall would not be completed in his day. In his eagerness to hasten the repairs, he used to get up early in the morning and ring up the workmen. Notwithstanding his great age, also, he would turn out half-dressed in cold weather to cut sticks for the fire. Colonel Wildman kindly remonstrated with him for thus risking his health, as others would do the work for him.

"Lord, sir," exclaimed the hale old fellow, "it's my air-bath—I'm all the better for it."

Unluckily, as he was thus employed one morning, a splinter flew up and wounded one of his eyes. An inflammation took place; he lost the sight of that eye, and subsequently of the other. Poor Joe gradually pined away, and grew melancholy. Colonel Wildman kindly tried to cheer him up,—“Come, come,

old boy," cried he, "be of good heart, you will yet take your place in the servants' hall."

"Nay, nay, sir," replied he, "I did hope once that I should live to see it—I looked forward to it with pride, I confess; but it is all over with me now—I shall soon go home!"

He died shortly afterwards, at the advanced age of eighty six, seventy of which had been passed as an honest and faithful servant at the Abbey. Colonel Wildman had him decently interred in the church of Hucknall Torkard, near the vault of Lord Byron.

SUPERSTITIONS OF THE ABBEY

THE anecdotes I had heard of the quondam housekeeper of Lord Byron rendered me desirous of paying her a visit. I rode in company with Colonel Wildman, therefore, to the cottage of her son William, where she resides, and found her seated by her fireside, with a favourite cat perched upon her shoulder and purring in her ear. Nanny Smith is a large, good-looking woman, a specimen of the old-fashioned country housewife, combining antiquated notions and prejudices, and very limited information, with natural good sense. She loves to gossip about the Abbey and Lord Byron, and was soon drawn into a course of anecdotes, though mostly of an humble kind, such as suited the meridian of the housekeeper's room and servants' hall. She seemed to entertain a kind recollection of Lord Byron, though she had evidently been much perplexed by some of his vagaries; and especially by the means he adopted to counteract his tendency to corpulency. He used various modes to sweat himself down; sometimes he would lie for a long time in a warm bath, sometimes he would walk up the hills in the park, wrapped up and loaded with great coats; "a sad toil for the poor youth," added Nanny, "he being so lame."

His meals were scanty and irregular, consisting of dishes which Nanny seemed to hold in great contempt, such as pilaw, macaroni, and light puddings.

She contradicted the report of the licentious life which he

was reported to lead at the Abbey, and of the paramours said to have been brought with him from London. "A great part of his time used to be passed lying on a sofa reading. Sometimes he had young gentlemen of his acquaintance with him, and they played some mad pranks; but nothing but what young gentlemen may do, and no harm done."

"Once, it is true," she added, "he had with him a beautiful boy as a page, which the housemaids said was a girl. For my part, I know nothing about it. Poor soul, he was so lame he could not go out much with the men; all the comfort he had was to be a little with the lasses. The housemaids, however, were very jealous; one of them, in particular, took the matter in great dudgeon. Her name was Lucy; she was a great favourite with Lord Byron, and had been much noticed by him, and began to have high notions. She had her fortune told by a man who squinted, to whom she gave two-and-sixpence. He told her to hold up her head and look high, for she would come to great things. Upon this," added Nanny, "the poor thing dreamt of nothing less than becoming a lady, and mistress of the Abbey; and promised me, if such luck should happen to her, she would be a good friend to me. Ah well-a-day! Lucy never had the fine fortune she dreamt of; but she had better than I thought for: she is now married, and keeps a public-house at Warwick."

Finding that we listened to her with great attention, Nanny Smith went on with her gossiping. "One time," said she, "Lord Byron took a notion that there was a deal of money buried about the Abbey by the monks in old times, and nothing would serve him but he must have the flagging taken up in the cloisters; and they digged and digged, but found nothing but stone coffins full of bones. Then he must needs have one of the coffins put in one end of the great hall, so that the servants were afraid to go there of nights. Several of the skulls were cleaned and put in frames in his room. I used to have to go into the room at night to shut the windows, and if I glanced an eye at them, they all seemed to grin; which I believe skulls always do. I can't say but I was glad to get out of the room."

"There was at one time (and for that matter there is still) a good deal said about ghosts haunting about the Abbey. The

keeper's wife said she saw two standing in a dark part of the cloisters just opposite the chapel, and one in the garden by the Lord's well. Then there was a young lady, a cousin of Lord Byron, who was staying in the Abbey and slept in the room next the clock; and she told me that one night when she was lying in bed, she saw a lady in white come out of the wall on one side of the room, and go into the wall on the opposite side.

"Lord Byron one day said to me, 'Nanny, what nonsense they tell about ghosts, as if there ever were any such things. I have never seen anything of the kind about the Abbey, and I warrant you have not.' This was all done, do you see, to draw me out; but I said nothing, but shook my head. However, they say his lordship did once see something. It was in the great hall—something all black and hairy: he said it was the devil.

"For my part," continued Nanny Smith, "I never saw any thing of the kind—but I heard something once. I was one evening scrubbing the floor of the little dining-room at the end of the long gallery; it was after dark; I expected every moment to be called to tea, but wished to finish what I was about. All at once I heard heavy footsteps in the great hall. They sounded like the tramp of a horse. I took the light and went to see what it was. I heard the steps come from the lower end of the hall to the fireplace in the centre, where they stopped; but I could see nothing. I returned to my work, and in a little time heard the same noise again. I went again with the light; the footsteps stopped by the fireplace as before; still I could see nothing. I returned to my work, when I heard the steps for a third time. I then went into the hall without a light, but they stopped just the same, by the fireplace halfway up the hall. I thought this rather odd, but returned to my work. When it was finished, I took the light and went through the hall, as that was my way to the kitchen. I heard no more footsteps, and thought no more of the matter, when, on coming to the lower end of the hall, I found the door locked, and then, on one side of the door, I saw the stone coffin with the skull and bones that had been dug up in the cloisters."

Here Nanny paused: I asked her if she believed that the

mysterious footsteps had any connexion with the skeleton in the coffin; but she shook her head and would not commit herself. We took our leave of the good old dame shortly after, and the story she had related gave subject for conversation on our ride homeward. It was evident she had spoken the truth as to what she had heard, but had been deceived by some peculiar effect of sound. Noises are propagated about a huge irregular edifice of the kind in a very deceptive manner: footsteps are prolonged and reverberated by the vaulted cloisters and echoing halls; the creaking and slamming of distant gates, the rushing of the blast through the groves and among the ruined arches of the chapel, have all a strangely delusive effect at night.

Colonel Wildman gave an instance of the kind from his own experience. Not long after he had taken up his residence at the Abbey, he heard one moonlight night a noise as if a carriage was passing at a distance. He opened the window and leaned out. It then seemed as if the great iron roller was dragged along the gravel walks and terrace, but there was nothing to be seen. When he saw the gardener on the following morning, he questioned him about working so late at night. The gardener declared that no one had been at work, and the roller was chained up. He was sent to examine it, and came back with a countenance full of surprise. The roller had been moved in the night, but he declared no mortal hand could have moved it. "Well," replied the Colonel, good-humouredly, "I am glad to find I have a brownie to work for me."

Lord Byron did much to foster and give currency to the superstitious tales connected with the Abbey, by believing, or pretending to believe in them. Many have supposed that his mind was really tinged with superstition, and that his innate infirmity was increased by passing much of his time in a lonely way about the empty halls and cloisters of the Abbey, then in a ruinous melancholy state, and brooding over the skulls and effigies of its former inmates. I should rather think that he found poetical enjoyment in these supernatural themes, and that his imagination delighted to people this gloomy and romantic pile with all kinds of shadowy inhabitants. Certain it is, the aspect of the mansion under the

varying influence of twilight and moonlight, and cloud and sunshine operating upon its halls, and galleries, and monkish cloisters, is enough to breed all kinds of fancies in the minds of its inmates, especially if poetically or superstitiously inclined.

I have already mentioned some of the fabled visitants of the Abbey. The goblin friar, however, is the one to whom Lord Byron has given the greatest importance. It walked the cloisters by night, and sometimes glimpses of it were seen in other parts of the Abbey. Its appearance was said to portend some impending evil to the master of the mansion. Lord Byron pretended to have seen it about a month before he contracted his ill-starred marriage with Miss Milbanke.

He has embodied this tradition in the following ballad, in which he represents the friar as one of the ancient inmates of the Abbey, maintaining by night a kind of spectral possession of it, in right of the fraternity. Other traditions, however, represent him as one of the friars doomed to wander about the place in atonement for his crimes. But to the Ballad:—

“Beware! beware! of the Black Friar,
Who sitteth by Norman stone,
For he mutters his prayer in the midnight air,
And his mass of the days that are gone.
When the Lord of the Hill, Amundeville,
Made Norman Church his prey,
And expell'd the friars, one friar still
Would not be driven away.

Though he came in his might, with King Henry's right,
To turn church-lands to lay,
With sword in hand, and torch to light
Their walls, if they said nay,
A monk remain'd, unchased, unchain'd,
And he did not seem form'd of clay,
For he's seen in the porch, and he's seen in the church,
Though he is not seen by day.

And whether for good, or whether for ill,
•It is not mine to say;
But still to the house of Amundeville
He abideth night and day.
By the marriage-bed of their lords, 'tis said,
He flits on the bridle eve;
And 'tis held as faith, to their bed of death,
He comes—but not to grieve.

When an heir is born he is heard to mourn,
And when aught is to befall
That ancient line, in the pale moonshine
He walks from hall to hall.
His form you may trace, but not his face,
'Tis shadow'd by his cowl;
But his eyes may be seen from the folds between,
And they seem of a parted soul.

But beware! beware! of the Black Friar,
He still retains his sway,
For he is yet the church's heir,
Whoever may be the lay.
Amundeville is lord by day,
But the monk is lord by night,
Nor wine nor wassail could raise a vassal
To question that friar's right.

Say nought to him as he walks the hall,
And he'll say nought to you;
He sweeps along in his dusky pall,
As o'er the grass the dew.
Then, gramercy! for the Black Friar;
Heaven sain him, fair or foul,
And whatsoever may be his prayer,
Let ours be for his soul."

Such is the story of the goblin friar, which, partly through old tradition, and partly through the influence of Lord Byron's rhymes, has become completely established in the Abbey, and threatens to hold possession as long as the old edifice shall endure. Various visitors have either fancied, or pretended to have seen him, and a cousin of Lord Byron, Miss Sally Parkins, is even said to have made a sketch of him from memory. As to the servants at the Abbey, they have become possessed with all kinds of superstitious fancies. The long corridors and Gothic halls, with their ancient portraits and dark figures in armour, are all haunted regions to them; they even fear to sleep alone, and will scarce venture at night on any distant errand about the Abbey unless they go in couples.

Even the magnificent chamber in which I was lodged was subject to the supernatural influences which reigned over the Abbey, and was said to be haunted by "Sir John Byron the Little with the great Beard." The ancient black-looking portrait of this family worthy, which hangs over the door of the great saloon, was said to descend occasionally at midnight

from the frame, and walk the rounds of the state apartments. Nay, his visitations were not confined to the night, for a young lady, on a visit to the Abbey some years since, declared that, on passing in broad day by the door of the identical chamber I have described, which stood partly open, she saw Sir John Byron the Little seated by the fireplace, reading out of a great black-letter book. From this circumstance some have been led to suppose that the story of Sir John Byron may be in some measure connected with the mysterious sculptures of the chimneypiece already mentioned; but this has no countenance from the most authentic antiquarians of the Abbey.

For my own part, the moment I learned the wonderful stories and strange suppositions connected with my apartment, it became an imaginary realm to me. As I lay in bed at night and gazed at the mysterious panel-work, where Gothic knight, and Christian dame, and Paynim lover gazed upon me in effigy, I used to weave a thousand fancies concerning them. The great figures in the tapestry, also, were almost animated by the workings of my imagination, and the Vandyke portraits of the cavalier and lady that looked down with pale aspects from the wall had almost a spectral effect, from their immovable gaze and silent companionship:—

“For by dim lights the portraits of the dead
Have something ghastly, desolate, and dread.
— Their buried looks still wave
Along the canvass; their eyes glance like dreams
On ours, as spars within some dusky cave,
But death is mingled in their shadowy beams.

In this way I used to conjure up fictions of the brain, and clothe the objects around me with ideal interest and import, until, as the Abbey clock tolled midnight, I almost looked to see Sir John Byron the Little with the great Beard stalk into the room with his book under his arm, and take his seat beside the mysterious chimneypiece.

ANNESLEY HALL.

At about three miles' distance from Newstead Abbey, and contiguous to its lands, is situated Annesley Hall, the old family mansion of the Chaworths. The families, like the estates, of the Byrons and Chaworths, were connected in former times, until the fatal duel between their two representatives. The feud, however, which prevailed for a time, promised to be cancelled by the attachment of two youthful hearts. While Lord Byron was yet a boy, he beheld Mary Ann Chaworth, a beautiful girl, and the sole heiress of Annesley. With that susceptibility to female charms, which he evinced almost from childhood, he became almost immediately enamoured of her. According to one of his biographers, it would appear that at first their attachment was mutual, yet clandestine. The father of Miss Chaworth was then living, and may have retained somewhat of the family hostility, for we are told that the interviews of Lord Byron and the young lady were private, at a gate which opened from her father's grounds to those of Newstead. However, they were so young at the time that these meetings could not have been regarded as of any importance: they were little more than children in years; but, as Lord Byron says of himself, his feelings were beyond his age.

The passion thus early conceived was blown into a flame, during a six weeks' vacation which he passed with his mother at Nottingham. The father of Miss Chaworth was dead, and she resided with her mother at the old Hall of Annesley. During Byron's minority, the estate of Newstead was let to Lord Grey de Ruthyn, but its youthful Lord was always a welcome guest at the Abbey. He would pass days at a time there, and make frequent visits thence to Annesley Hall. His visits were encouraged by Miss Chaworth's mother; she partook of none of the family feud, and probably looked with complacency upon an attachment that might heal old differences and unite two neighbouring estates.

The six weeks' vacation passed as a dream amongst the beautiful flowers of Annesley. Byron was scarce fifteen years of age, Mary Chaworth was two years older; but his heart, as I have said, was beyond his age, and his tenderness for her

was deep and passionate. These early loves, like the first run of the uncrushed grape, are the sweetest and strongest gushings of the heart, and however they may be superseded by other attachments in after years, the memory will continually recur to them, and fondly dwell upon their recollections.

His love for Miss Chaworth, to use Lord Byron's own expression, was "the romance of the most romantic period of his life," and I think we can trace the effect of it throughout the whole course of his writings, coming up every now and then, like some lurking theme which runs through a complicated piece of music, and links it all in a pervading chain of melody.

How tenderly and mournfully does he recall, in after years, the feelings awakened in his youthful and inexperienced bosom by this impassioned, yet innocent attachment; feelings, he says, lost or hardened in the intercourse of life:—

"The love of better things and better days,
The unbounded hope, and heavenly ignorance
Of what is called the world, and the world's ways;
The moments when we gather from a glance
More joy than from all future pride or praise,
Which kindle manhood, but can ne'er entrance
The heart in an existence of its own,
Of which another's bosom is the zone."

Whether this love was really responded to by the object is uncertain. Byron sometimes speaks as if he had met with kindness in return, at other times he acknowledges that she never gave him reason to believe she loved him. It is probable, however, that at first she experienced some flutterings of the heart. She was of a susceptible age; had as yet formed no other attachments; her lover, though boyish in years, was a man in intellect, a poet in imagination, and had a countenance of remarkable beauty.

With the six weeks' vacation ended this brief romance. Byron returned to school deeply enamoured, but if he had really made any impression on Miss Chaworth's heart, it was too slight to stand the test of absence. She was at that age when a female soon changes from the girl to the woman, and leaves her boyish lovers far behind her. While Byron was

pursuing his school-boy studies, she was mingling with society, and met with a gentleman of the name of Musters, remarkable, it is said, for manly beauty. A story is told of her having first seen him from the top of Annesley Hall, as he dashed through the park, with hound and horn, taking the lead of the whole field in a fox-chase, and that she was struck by the spirit of his appearance, and his admirable horsemanship. Under such favourable auspices, he wooed and won her, and when Lord Byron next met her, he learned to his dismay that she was the affianced bride of another.

With that pride of spirit which always distinguished him, he controlled his feelings and maintained a serene countenance. He even affected to speak calmly on the subject of her approaching nuptials. "The next time I see you," said he, "I suppose you will be Mrs. Chaworth?" (for she was to retain her family name). Her reply was, "I hope so."

I have given these brief details preparatory to a sketch of a visit which I made to the scene of this youthful romance. Annesley Hall I understood was shut up, neglected, and almost in a state of desolation; for Mr. Musters rarely visited it, residing with his family in the neighbourhood of Nottingham. I set out for the Hall on horseback, in company with Colonel Wildman, and followed by the great Newfoundland-dog Boatswain. In the course of our ride we visited a spot memorable in the love-story I have cited. It was the scene of this parting interview between Byron and Miss Chaworth, prior to her marriage. A long ridge of upland advances into the valley of Newstead, like a promontory into a lake, and was formerly crowned by a beautiful grove, a landmark to the neighbouring country. The grove and promontory are graphically described by Lord Byron in his "Dream," and an exquisite picture given of himself, and the lovely object of his boyish idolatry:—

"I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green, and of mild declivity, the last
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and corn-fields, and the abodes of men,
Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke

Arising from such rustic roofs;—the hill
Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fixed,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man:
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there,
Gazing—the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her;
And both were fair, and one was beautiful:
And both were young—yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon in the horizon's verge,
The maid was on the verge of womanhood:
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him."

I stood upon the spot consecrated by this memorable interview. Below me extended the "living landscape," once contemplated by the loving pair; the gentle valley of Newstead, diversified by woods and corn-fields, and village spires, and gleams of water, and the distant towers and pinnacles of the venerable Abbey. The diadem of trees, however, was gone. The attention drawn to it by the poet, and the romantic manner in which he had associated it with his early passion for Mary Chaworth, had nettled the irritable feelings of her husband, who but ill brooked the poetic celebrity conferred on his wife by the enamoured verses of another. The celebrated grove stood on his estate, and in a fit of spleen he ordered it to be levelled with the dust. At the time of my visit the mere roots of the trees were visible; but the hand that laid them low is execrated by every poetical pilgrim.

Descending the hill, we soon entered a part of what once was Annesley Park, and rode among time-worn and tempest-riven oaks and elms, with ivy clambering about their trunks, and rooks' nests among their branches. The park had been cut up by a post-road, crossing which we came to the gatehouse of Annesley Hall. It was an old brick building, that might have served as an outpost or barbican to the Hall during the Civil Wars, when every gentleman's house was liable to become a fortress. Loopholes were still visible in its walls, but the peaceful ivy had mantled the sides, overrun the roof, and almost buried the ancient clock in front, that still marked the waning hours of its decay.

An arched way led through the centre of the gate-house, secured by grated doors of open iron work, wrought into flowers and flourishes. These being thrown open, we entered a paved court-yard, decorated with shrubs and antique flower-pots, with a ruined stone fountain in the centre. The whole approach resembled that of an old French château.

On one side of the court-yard was a range of stables, now tenantless, but which bore traces of the fox-hunting squire; for there were stalls boxed up, into which the hunters might be turned loose when they came home from the chase.

At the lower end of the court, and immediately opposite the gate-house, extended the Hall itself—a rambling, irregular pile, patched and pieced at various times, and in various tastes, with gable-ends, stone balustrades, and enormous chimneys, that strutted out like buttresses from the walls. The whole front of the edifice was overrun with evergreens.

We applied for admission at the front door, which was under a heavy porch. The portal was strongly barricaded, and our knocking was echoed by waste and empty halls. Everything bore an appearance of abandonment. After a time, however, our knocking summoned a solitary tenant from some remote corner of the pile: it was a decent-looking little dame, who emerged from a side-door at a distance, and seemed a worthy inmate of the antiquated mansion; she had, in fact, grown old with it. Her name, she said, was Nanny Marsden; if she lived until next August, she would be seventy-one. A great part of her life had been passed in the Hall; and when the family had removed to Nottingham, she had been left in charge of it. The front of the house had been thus warily barricaded in consequence of the late riots at Nottingham, in the course of which the dwelling of her master had been sacked by the mob. To guard against any attempt of the kind upon the Hall, she had put it in this state of defence, though I rather think she and a superannuated gardener comprised the whole garrison. "You must be attached to the old building," said I, "after having lived so long in it." "Ah, sir!" replied she, "I am *getting in years*, and have a furnished cottage of my own in Annesley Wood, and begin to feel as if I should like to go and live in my own home."

Guided by the worthy little custodian of the fortress, we entered through the sallyport by which she had issued forth, and soon found ourselves in a spacious but somewhat gloomy hall, where the light was partially admitted through square stone-shafted windows, overhung with ivy. Everything around us had the air of an old-fashioned country squire's establishment. In the centre of the hall was a billiard-table, and about the walls were hung portraits of race-horses, hunters, and favourite dogs, mingled indiscriminately with family pictures.

Staircases led up from the hall to various apartments. In one of the rooms we were shown a couple of buff jerkins, and a pair of ancient jackboots, of the time of the Cavaliers,—relics which are often to be met with in the old English family mansions. These, however, had peculiar value, for the good little dame assured us they had belonged to Robin Hood. As we were in the midst of the region over which that famous outlaw once bore ruffian sway, it was not for us to gainsay his claim to any of these venerable relics, though we might have demurred that the articles of dress here shown were of a date much later than his time. Every antiquity, however, about Sherwood Forest is apt to be linked with the memory of Robin Hood and his gang.

As we were strolling about the mansion, our four-footed attendant, Boatswain, followed leisurely, as if taking a survey of the premises. I turned to rebuke him for his intrusion; but the moment the old housekeeper understood he had belonged to Lord Byron, her heart seemed to yearn towards him.

"Nay, nay," exclaimed she, "let him alone—let him go where he pleases; he's welcome. Ah, dear me! If he lived here, I should take great care of him—he should want for nothing. Well," continued she, fondling him, "who would have thought I should see a dog of Lord Byron in Annesley Hall!"

"I suppose, then," said I, "you recollect something of Lord Byron, when he used to visit here?" "Ah, bless him!" cried she, "that I do! He used to ride over here, and stay three days at a time, and sleep in the blue room. Ah, poor fellow! he was very much taken with my young mistress; he

used to walk about the garden and the terraces with her, and seemed to love the very ground she trod on ; he used to call her *his bright morning-star of Annesley*."

I felt the beautiful poetic phrase thrill through me.

"You appear to like the memory of Lord Byron?" said I.

"Ah, sir! why should not I? He was always main good to me when he came here. Well, well, they say it is a pity he and my young lady did not make a match! Her mother would have liked it. He was always a welcome guest, and some think it would have been well for him to have had her—but it was not to be. He went away to school, and then Mr. Musters saw her; and so things took their course."

The simple soul now showed us into the favourite sitting-room of Miss Chaworth, with a small flower-garden under the windows, in which she had delighted. In this room Byron used to sit and listen to her, as she played and sang, gazing upon her with the passionate and almost painful devotion of a love-sick stripling. He himself gives us a glowing picture of his mute idolatry:—

"He had no breath, no being, but in hers;
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words; she was his sight,
For his eye followed hers, and saw with hers,
Which colour'd all his objects. He had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously — his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony."

There was a little Welsh air, called "Mary Ann," which, from bearing her own name, he associated with herself, and often persuaded her to sing it over and over for him.

The chamber, like all the other parts of the house, had a look of sadness and neglect; the flower-pots beneath the window, which once bloomed beneath the hand of Mary Chaworth, were overrun with weeds; and the piano, which had once vibrated to her touch, and thrilled the heart of her stripling lover, was now unstrung and out of tune.

We continued our stroll about the waste apartments, of all shapes and sizes, and without much elegance of decoration. Some of them were hung with family portraits, among which was pointed out that of the Mr. Chaworth who was killed by the "wicked Lord Byron."

These dismal-looking portraits had a powerful effect upon the imagination of the stripling poet, on his first visit to the Hall. As they gazed down from the wall, he thought they scowled upon him, as if they had taken a grudge against him on account of the duel of his ancestor. He even gave this as a reason, though probably in jest, for not sleeping at the Hall, declaring that he feared they would come down from their frames at night to haunt him.

A feeling of the kind he has embodied in one of his stanzas of "Don Juan":—

"The forms of the grim knights and pictured saints
Look living in the moon; and as you turn
Backward and forward to the echoes faint
Of your own footsteps, voices from the urn
Appear to wake, and shadows wild and quaint
Start from the frames which fence their aspects stern,
As if to ask you how you dare to keep
A vigil there, where all but death should sleep."

Nor was the youthful poet singular in these fancies: the Hall, like most old English mansions that have ancient family portraits hanging about their dusky galleries and waste apartments, had its ghost story connected with these pale memorials of the dead. Our simple-hearted conductor stopped before the portrait of a lady, who had been a beauty in her time, and inhabited the Hall in the heyday of her charms. Something mysterious or melancholy was connected with her story: she died young, but continued for a long time to haunt the ancient mansion, to the great dismay of the servants and the occasional disquiet of the visitors, and it was with much difficulty her troubled spirit was conjured down and put to rest.

From the rear of the Hall we walked out into the garden, about which Byron used to stroll and loiter in company with Miss Chaworth. It was laid out in the old French style. There was a long terraced walk, with heavy stone balustrades

and sculptured urns, overrun with ivy and evergreens. A neglected shrubbery bordered one side of the terrace, with a lofty grove inhabited by a venerable community of rooks. Great flights of steps led down from the terrace to a flower-garden, laid out in formal plots. The rear of the Hall, which overlooked the garden, had the weather-stains of centuries; and its stone-shafted casements, and an ancient sun-dial against its walls, carried back the mind to days of yore.

The retired and quiet garden, once a little sequestered world of love and romance, was now all matted and wild, yet was beautiful even in its decay. Its air of neglect and desolation was in unison with the fortune of the two beings who had once walked here in the freshness of youth, and life, and beauty. The garden, like their young hearts, had gone to waste and ruin.

Returning to the Hall, we now visited a chamber built over the porch, or grand entrance: it was in a ruinous condition, the ceiling having fallen in and the floor given way. This, however, is a chamber rendered interesting by poetical associations. It is supposed to be the oratory alluded to by Lord Byron in his "Dream," wherein he pictures his departure from Annesley, after learning that Mary Chaworth was engaged to be married:—

"There was an ancient mansion, and before
Its walls there was a steed caparison'd;
Within an antique Oratory stood
The Boy of whom I spake; — he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro: anon
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
Words which I could not guess of; then he lean'd
His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 'twere
With a convulsion — then arose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet; as he paused,
The lady of his love re-entered there;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet
She knew she was by him beloved — she knew,
For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart
Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp

He took her hand: a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded as it came;
He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps
Return'd, but not as bidding her adieu,
For they did part with mutual smiles. He pass'd
From out the massy gate of that old hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way,
And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more."

In one of his journals, Lord Byron describes his feelings after thus leaving the oratory. Arriving on the summit of a hill, which commanded the last view of Annesley, he checked his horse, and gazed back with mingled pain and fondness upon the groves which embowered the Hall, and thought upon the lovely being that dwelt there, until his feelings were quite dissolved in tenderness. The conviction at length recurred that she never could be his, when, rousing himself from his reverie, he struck his spurs into his steed and dashed forward, as if by rapid motion to leave reflection behind him.

Yet, notwithstanding what he asserts in the verses last quoted, he did pass the "hoary threshold" of Annesley again. It was, however, after the lapse of several years, during which he had grown up to manhood, had passed through the ordeal of pleasures and tumultuous passions, and had felt the influence of other charms. Miss Chaworth, too, had become a wife and a mother, and he dined at Annesley Hall at the invitation of her husband. He thus met the object of his early idolatry in the very scene of his tender devotions, which, as he says, her smiles had once made a heaven to him. The scene was but little changed. He was in the very chamber where he had so often listened entranced to the witchery of her voice; there were the same instruments and music; there lay her flower-garden beneath the window, and the walks through which he had wandered with her in the intoxication of youthful love. Can we wonder that, amidst the tender recollections which every object around him was calculated to awaken, the fond passion of his boyhood should rush back in full current to his heart? He was himself surprised at this sudden revulsion of his feelings, but he had acquired self-possession and could command them. His firmness, however,

was doomed to undergo a further trial. While seated by the object of his secret devotions, with all these recollections throbbing in his bosom, her infant daughter was brought into the room. At the sight of the child he started; it dispelled the last lingerings of his dream, and he afterwards confessed, that to repress his emotion at the moment was the severest part of his task.

The conflict of feelings that raged within his bosom throughout this fond and tender, yet painful and embarrassing visit, are touchingly depicted in lines which he wrote immediately afterwards, and which, though not addressed to her by name, are evidently intended for the eye and the heart of the fair Lady of Annesley:—

“ Well ! thou art happy, and I feel
That I should thus be happy too;
For still my heart regards thy weal
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

Thy husband's blest—and 'twill impart
Some pangs to view his happier lot:
But let them pass—Oh ! how my heart
Would hate him, if he loved thee not !

When late I saw thy favourite child
I thought my jealous heart would break,
But when the unconscious infant smiled
I kiss'd it for its mother's sake.

I kiss'd it and repress'd my sighs
Its father in its face to see ;
But then it had its mother's eyes,
And they were all to love and me

Mary, adieu ! I must away :
While thou art blest I'll not repine ;
But near thee I can never stay :
My heart would soon again be thine.

I deem'd that time, I deem'd that pride,
Had quench'd at length my boyish flame ;
Nor knew, till seated by thy side,
My heart in all, save love, the same.

Yet I was calm : I knew that time
My breast would thrill before thy look ;
But now to tremble were a crime—
We met, and not a nerve was shook.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,
 Yet meet with no confusion there;
 One only feeling could'st thou trace—
 The sullen calmness of despair.

Away! away! my early dream
 Remembrance never must awake:
 Oh! where is Lethe's fabled stream?
 My foolish heart, be still, or break."

The revival of this early passion, and the melancholy associations which it spread over those scenes in the neighbourhood of Newstead, which would necessarily be the places of his frequent resort while in England, are alluded to by him as a principal cause of his first departure for the Continent:—

"When man, expell'd from Eden's bowers,
 A moment lingered near the gate,
 Each scene recall'd the vanish'd hours,
 And bade him curse his future fate.

But wandering on through distant climes,
 He learnt to bear his load of grief;
 Just gave a sigh to other times,
 And found in busier scenes relief.

Thus, Mary, must it be with me,
 And I must view thy charms no more;
 For, while I linger near to thee,
 I sigh for all I knew before."

It was in the subsequent June that he set off on his pilgrimage by sea and land, which was to become the theme of his immortal poem. That the image of Mary Chaworth, as he saw and loved her in the days of his boyhood, followed him to the very shore, is shown in the glowing stanzas addressed to her on the eve of embarkation:—

"'Tis done—and shivering in the gale,
 The bark unfurls her snowy sail;
 And whistling o'er the bending mast,
 Loud sings on high the fresh'ning blast;
 And I must from this land be gone,
 Because I cannot love but one.

And I will cross the whitening foam,
 And I will seek a foreign home;
 Till I forget a false fair face,
 I ne'er shall find a resting-place:
 My own dark thoughts I cannot shun,
 But ever love, and love but one.

To think of every early scene,
 Of what we are and what we've been,
 Would overwhelm some softer hearts with woe—
 But mine, alas! has stood the blow :
 Yet still beats on as it begun,
 And never truly loves but one.

And who that dear loved one may be
 Is not for vulgar eyes to see,
 And why that early love was cross'd,
 Thou know'st the best, I feel the most :
 But few that dwell beneath the sun
 Have loved so long, and loved but one.

I've tried another's fetters, too,
 With charms, perchance, as fair to view ;
 And I would fain have loved as well,
 But some unconquerable spell
 Forbade my bleeding breast to own
 A kindred care for aught but one.

'Twould soothe to take one lingering view,
 And bless thee in my last adieu ;
 Yet wish I not those eyes to weep
 For him who wanders o'er the deep .
 His home, his hope, his youth are gone,
 Yet still he loves, and loves but one."

The painful interview at Annesley Hall, which revived with such intenseness his early passion, remained stamped upon his memory with singular force, and seems to have survived all his "wanderings through distant climes," to which he trusted as an oblivious antidote. Upwards of two years after that event, when, having made his famous pilgrimage, he was once more an inmate of Newstead Abbey, his vicinity to Annesley Hall brought the whole scene vividly before him, and he thus recalls it in a poetic epistle to a friend :—

"I've seen my bride another's bride,—
 Have seen her seated by his side,—
 Have seen the infant which she bore
 Wear the sweet smile the mother wore,
 When she and I in youth have smiled
 As fond and faultless as her child ;—
 Have seen her eyes, in cold disdain,
 Ask if I felt no secret pain.

And I have acted well my part,
 And made my cheek belie by heart,
 Return'd the freezing glance she gave,
 Yet felt the while *that* woman's slave ;

Have kiss'd, as if without design,
 The babe which ought to have been mine,
 And show'd, alas! in each caress,
 Time had not made me love the less."

"It was about the time," says Moore, in his life of Lord Byron, "when he was thus bitterly feeling and expressing the blight which his heart had suffered from a *real* object of affection, that his poems on an imaginary one, 'Thyrza,' were written." He was at the same time grieving over the loss of several of his earliest and dearest friends, the companions of his joyous schoolboy hours. To recur to the beautiful language of Moore, who writes with the kindred and kindling sympathies of a true poet:—"All these recollections of the young and the dead mingled themselves in his mind with the image of her, who, though living, was for him as much lost as they, and diffused that general feeling of sadness and fondness through his soul, which found a vent in these poems. * * * It was the blending of the two affections in his memory and imagination that gave birth to an ideal object combining the best features of both, and drew from him those saddest and tenderest of love-poems, in which we find all the depth and intensity of real feeling, touched over with such a light as no reality ever wore."

An early, innocent, and unfortunate passion, however fruitful of pain it may be to the man, is a lasting advantage to the poet. It is a well of sweet and bitter fancies; of refined and gentle sentiments; of elevated and ennobling thoughts; shut up in the deep recesses of the heart, keeping it green amidst the withering blights of the world, and, by its casual gushings and overflowings, recalling at times all the freshness, and innocence, and enthusiasm of youthful days. Lord Byron was conscious of this effect, and purposely cherished and brooded over the remembrance of his early passion, and of all the scenes of Annesley Hall connected with it. It was this remembrance that attuned his mind to some of its most elevated and virtuous strains, and shed an inexpressible grace and pathos over his best productions.

Being thus put upon the traces of this little love-story, I cannot refrain from threading them out, as they appear from time to time in various passages of Lord Byron's works. During

his subsequent rambles in the East, when time and distance had softened away his "early romance" almost into the remembrance of a pleasing and tender dream, he received accounts of the object of it, which represented her, still in her paternal Hall, among her native bowers of Annesley, surrounded by a blooming and beautiful family, yet a prey to secret and withering melancholy:—

"In her home,
A thousand leagues from his,—her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing infancy,
Daughters and sons of beauty, but—behold!
Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye,
As if its lids were charged with unshed tears."

For an instant the buried tenderness of early youth, and the fluttering hopes which accompanied it, seemed to have revived in his bosom, and the idea to have flashed upon his mind that his image might be connected with her secret woes—but he rejected the thought almost as soon as formed.

"What could her grief be?—she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
Or ill-repress'd affection, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be?—she had loved him not,
Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,
Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
Upon her mind—a spectre of the past."

The cause of her grief was a matter of rural comment in the neighbourhood of Newstead and Annesley. It was disconnected from all idea of Lord Byron, but attributed to the harsh and capricious conduct of one to whose kindness and affection she had a sacred claim. The domestic sorrows which had long preyed in secret on her heart, at length affected her intellect, and the "bright morning star of Annesley" was eclipsed for ever.

"The lady of his love,—oh! she was changed
As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wandered from its dwelling, and her eyes,
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm: but her thoughts

Were combinations of disjointed things;
 And forms impalpable and unperceived
 Of others' sight, familiar were to hers.
 And this the world calls frenzy."

Notwithstanding lapse of time, change of place, and a succession of splendid and spirit-stirring scenes in various countries, the quiet and gentle scene of his boyish love seems to have held a magic sway over the recollections of Lord Byron, and the image of Mary Chaworth to have unexpectedly obtruded itself upon his mind like some supernatural visitation. Such was the fact on the occasion of his marriage with Miss Milbanke; Annesley Hall and all its fond associations floated like a vision before his thoughts, even when at the altar, and on the point of pronouncing the nuptial vows. The circumstance is related by him with a force and feeling that persuade us of its truth:—

"A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
 The wanderer was returned. I saw him stand
 Before an altar—with a gentle bride;
 Her face was fair, but was not that which made
 The star-light of his boyhood;—as he stood
 Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
 The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock
 That in the antique oratory shook
 His bosom in its solitude; and then—
 As in that hour—a moment o'er his face
 The tablet of unutterable thoughts
 Was traced,—and then it faded as it came.
 And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
 The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
 And all things reel'd around him; he could see
 Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
 But the old mansion, and the accustomed hall,
 And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
 The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
 All things pertaining to that place and hour,
 And her who was his destiny, came back,
 And thrust themselves between him and the light
 • What business had they there at such a time?"

The history of Lord Byron's union is too well known to need narration. The errors, and humiliations, and heart-burnings that followed upon it, gave additional effect to the remembrance of his early passion, and tormented him with

the idea, that had he been successful in his suit to the lovely heiress of Annesley, they might both have shared a happier destiny. In one of his manuscripts, written long after his marriage, having accidentally mentioned Miss Chaworth as "my M. A. C.," "Alas!" exclaims he, with a sudden burst of feeling, "why do I say *my*? Our union would have healed feuds in which blood had been shed by our fathers; it would have joined lands broad and rich; it would have joined at least *one* heart, and two persons not ill-matched in years—and—and—and—what has been the result?"

But enough of Annesley Hall and the poetical themes connected with it. I felt as if I could linger for hours about its ruined oratory, and silent hall, and neglected garden, and spin reveries and dream dreams, until all became an ideal world around me. The day, however, was fast declining, and the shadows of evening throwing deeper shades of melancholy about the place. Taking our leave of the worthy old house-keeper, therefore, with a small compensation and many thanks for her civilities, we mounted our horses and pursued our way back to Newstead Abbey

THE LAKE

"Before the mansion lay a lucid lake,
Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly fed
By a river, which its softened way did take
In currents through the calmer water spread
Around: the wild fowl nestled in the brake
And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed:
The woods sloped downward to its brink, and stood
With their green faces fixed upon the flood."

SUCH is Lord Byron's description of one of a series of beautiful sheets of water, formed in old times by the monks by damming up the course of a small river. Here he used daily to enjoy his favourite recreations of swimming and sailing. The "wicked old Lord," in his scheme of rural devastation, had cut down all the woods that once fringed the lake; Lord Byron, on coming of age, endeavoured to restore them, and a beautiful young wood, planted by him, now sweeps up

from the water's edge, and clothes the hill side opposite to the Abbey. To this woody nook Colonel Wildman has given the appropriate title of "the Poet's Corner."

The lake has inherited its share of the traditions and fables connected with everything in and about the Abbey. It was a petty Mediterranean sea, on which the "wicked old Lord" used to gratify his nautical tastes and humours. He had his mimic castles and fortresses along its shores, and his mimic fleets upon its waters, and used to get up mimic sea-fights. The remains of his petty fortifications still awaken the curious inquiries of visitors. In one of his vagaries, he caused a large vessel to be brought on wheels from the sea-coast and launched in the lake. The country people were surprised to see a ship thus sailing over dry land. They called to mind a saying of Mother Shipton, the famous prophet of the vulgar, that whenever a ship freighted with ling should cross Sherwood Forest, Newstead would pass out of the Byron family. The country people, who detested the old Lord, were anxious to verify the prophecy. Ling, in the dialect of Nottingham, is the name for heather; with this plant they heaped the fated bark as it passed, so that it arrived full freighted at Newstead.

The most important stories about the lake, however, relate to the treasures that are supposed to lie buried in its bosom. These may have taken their origin in a fact which actually occurred. There was one time fished up from the deep part of the lake a great eagle of molten brass, with expanded wings, standing on a pedestal or perch of the same metal. It had doubtless served as a stand or reading-desk in the Abbey chapel, to hold a folio Bible or missal.

The sacred relic was sent to a brazier to be cleaned. As he was at work upon it he discovered that the pedestal was hollow and composed of several pieces. Unscrewing these, he drew forth a number of parchment deeds and grants appertaining to the Abbey, and bearing the seals of Edward III. and Henry VIII., which had thus been concealed, and ultimately sunk in the lake by the friars, to substantiate their right and title to these domains at some future day.

One of the parchment scrolls thus discovered, throws rather an awkward light upon the kind of life led by the

friars of Newstead. It is an indulgence granted to them for a certain number of months, in which plenary pardon is assured in advance for all kinds of crimes, among which, several of the most gross and sensual are specifically mentioned, and the weaknesses of the flesh to which they were prone.

After inspecting these testimonials of monkish life, in the regions of Sherwood Forest, we cease to wonder at the virtuous indignation of Robin Hood and his outlaw crew, at the sleek sensualists of the cloister:—

“ I never hurt the husbandman,
That use to till the ground,
Nor spill their blood that range the wood,
To follow hawk and hound.

My chiefest spite to clergy is,
Who in these days bear sway;
With friars and monks, with their fine spunks,
I make my chiefest prey.”

Old Ballad of Robin Hood.

The brazen eagle has been transferred to the parochial and collegiate church of Southall, about twenty miles from Newstead, where it may still be seen in the centre of the chancel, supporting, as of yore, a ponderous Bible. As to the documents it contained, they are carefully treasured up by Colonel Wildman among his other deeds and papers, in an iron chest secured by a patent lock of nine bolts, almost equal to a magic spell.

The fishing up of this brazen relic, as I have already hinted, has given rise to the tales of treasure lying at the bottom of the lake, thrown in there by the monks when they abandoned the Abbey. The favourite story is, that there is a great iron chest there filled with gold and jewels, and chalices and crucifixes. Nay, that it has been seen, when the water of the lake was unusually low. There were large iron rings at each end, but all attempts to move it were ineffectual; either the gold it contained was too ponderous, or, what is more probable, it was secured by one of those magic spells usually laid upon hidden treasure. It remains, therefore, at the bottom of the lake to this day; and it is to be hoped, may one day or other be discovered by the present worthy proprietor.

ROBIN HOOD AND SHERWOOD FOREST.

WHILE at Newstead Abbey I took great delight in riding and rambling about the neighbourhood, studying out the traces of merry Sherwood Forest, and visiting the haunts of Robin Hood. The relics of the old forest are few and scattered, but as to the bold outlaw who once held a kind of freebooting sway over it, there is scarce a hill or dale, a cliff or cavern, a well or fountain, in this part of the country, that is not connected with his memory. The very names of some of the tenants on the Newstead estate, such as Beardall and Hardstaff, sound as if they may have been borne in old times by some of the stalwart fellows of the outlaw gang.

One of the earliest books that captivated my fancy when a child was a collection of Robin Hood ballads, "adorned with cuts," which I bought of an old Scotch pedler, at the cost of all my holiday money. How I devoured its pages, and gazed upon its uncouth woodcuts! For a time my mind was filled with picturings of "Merrie Sherwood," and the exploits and revelling of the bold foresters; and Robin Hood, Little John, Friar Tuck, and their doughty compeers, were my heroes of romance.

These early feelings were in some degree revived when I found myself in the very heart of the far-famed forest, and, as I said before, I took a kind of schoolboy delight in hunting up all traces of old Sherwood and its sylvan chivalry. One of the first of my antiquarian rambles was on horseback, in company with Colonel Wildman and his lady, who undertook to guide me to some of the mouldering monuments of the forest. One of these stands in front of the very gate of Newstead Park, and is known throughout the country by the name of "the Pilgrim Oak." It is a venerable tree, of great size, overshadowing a wide arena of the road. Under its shade the rustics of the neighbourhood have been accustomed to assemble on certain holidays, and celebrate their rural festivals. This custom had been handed down from father to son for several generations, until the oak had acquired a kind of sacred character.

The "old Lord Byron," however, in whose eyes nothing was sacred, when he laid his desolating hand on the groves and forests of Newstead, doomed likewise this traditional tree to the axe. Fortunately the good people of Nottingham heard of the danger of their favourite oak, and hastened to ransom it from destruction. They afterwards made a present of it to the poet, when he came to the estate, and the Pilgrim Oak is likely to continue a rural gathering-place for many coming generations.

From this magnificent and time-honoured tree we continued on our sylvan research in quest of another oak, of more ancient date and less flourishing condition. A ride of two or three miles, the latter part across open wastes, once clothed with forest, now bare and cheerless, brought us to the tree in question. It was the Oak of Ravenshead, one of the last survivors of old Sherwood, and which had evidently once held a high head in the forest; it was now a mere wreck, crazed by time and blasted by lightning, and standing alone on a naked waste, like a ruined column in a desert.

"The scenes are desert now, and bare,
Where flourished once a forest fair,
When these waste glens with copse were lined,
And peopled with the hart and hind.
Yon lonely oak, would he could tell
The changes of his parent dell,
Since he, so grey and stubborn now,
Waved in each breeze a sapling bough.
Would he could tell how deep the shade
A thousand mingled branches made.
Here in my shade, methinks he'd say,
The mighty stag at noontide lay,
While doe, and roe, and red-deer good,
Have bounded by through gay greenwood."

At no great distance from Ravenshead Oak is a small cave, which goes by the name of Robin Hood's stable. It is in the breast of a hill, scooped out of brown freestone, with rude attempts at columns and arches. Within are two niches, which served, it is said, as stalls for the bold outlaw's horses. To this retreat he retired when hotly pursued by the law, for the place was a secret even from his band. The cave is overshadowed by an oak and alder, and is hardly discoverable

even at the present day; but when the country was overrun with forest it must have been completely concealed.

There was an agreeable wildness and loneliness in a great part of our ride. Our devious road wound down, at one time, among rocky dells, by wandering streams, and lonely pools, haunted by shy water-fowl. We passed through a skirt of woodland, of more modern planting, but considered a legitimate offspring of the ancient forest, and commonly called Jock of Sherwood. In riding through these quiet, solitary scenes, the partridge and pheasant would now and then burst upon the wing, and the hare scud away before us.

Another of these rambling rides in quest of popular antiquities, was to a chain of rocky cliffs, called the Kirkby Craggs, which skirt the Robin Hood hills. Here, leaving my horse at the foot of the crags, I scaled their rugged sides, and seated myself in a niche of the rocks, called Robin Hood's Chair. It commands a wide prospect over the valley of Newstead, and here the bold outlaw is said to have taken his seat, and kept a look-out upon the roads below, watching for merchants, and bishops, and other wealthy travellers, upon whom to pounce down, like an eagle from his eyrie.

Descending from the cliffs and remounting my horse, a ride of a mile or two further along a narrow "robber path," as it was called, which wound up into the hills between perpendicular rocks, led to an artificial cavern cut in the face of a cliff, with a door and window wrought through the living stone. This bears the name of Friar Tuck's cell, or hermitage, where, according to tradition, that jovial anchorite used to make good cheer and boisterous revel with his free-booting comrades.

Such were some of the vestiges of old Sherwood and its renowned "yeomandrie," which I visited in the neighbourhood of Newstead. The worthy clergyman who officiated as chaplain at the Abbey, seeing my zeal in the cause, informed me of a considerable tract of the ancient forest still in existence, about ten miles distant. There were many fine old oaks in it, he said, that had stood for centuries, but were now shattered and "stagheaded;" that is to say, their upper branches were bare, and blasted, and straggling out like the antlers of a deer. Their trunks, too, were hollow, and full of crows and

jackdaws, who made them their nestling-places. He occasionally rode over to the forest in the long summer evenings, and pleased himself with loitering in the twilight about the green alleys and under the venerable trees.

The description given by the chaplain made me anxious to visit this remnant of old Sherwood, and he kindly offered to be my guide and companion. We accordingly sallied forth one morning on horseback on this sylvan expedition. Our ride took us through a part of the country where King John had once held a hunting-seat; the ruins of which are still to be seen. At that time the whole neighbourhood was an open royal forest, or frank-chase, as it was termed; for King John was an enemy to parks and warrens, and other enclosures, by which game was fenced in for the private benefit and recreation of the nobles and the clergy.

Here, on the brow of a gentle hill, commanding an extensive prospect of what had once been forest, stood another of those monumental trees, which to my mind gave a peculiar interest to this neighbourhood. It was the Parliament Oak, so called in memory of an assemblage of the kind held by King John beneath its shade. The lapse of upwards of six centuries had reduced this once mighty tree to a mere crumbling fragment; yet, like a gigantic torso in ancient statuary, the grandeur of the mutilated trunk gave evidence of what it had been in the days of its glory. In contemplating its mouldering remains, the fancy busied itself in calling up the scene that must have been presented beneath its shade, when this sunny hill swarmed with the pageantry of a warlike and hunting court; when silken pavilions and warrior tents decked its crest, and royal standards, and baronial banners, and knightly pennons rolled out to the breeze; when prelates and courtiers, and steel-clad chivalry, thronged round the person of the monarch, while at a distance loitered the foresters in green, and all the rural and hunting train that waited upon his sylvan sports.

"A thousand vassals mustered round
With horse, and hawk, and horn, and hound;
And through the brake the rangers stalk,
And falconers hold the ready hawk;

And foresters in greenwood trim
Lead in the leash the greyhound grim."

Such was the phantasmagoria that presented itself for a moment to my imagination, peopling the silent place before me with empty shadows of the past. The reverie, however, was transient; king, courtier, and steel-clad warrior, and forester in green, with horn, and hawk, and hound, all faded again into oblivion, and I awoke to all that remained of this once stirring scene of human pomp and power—a mouldering oak, and a tradition.

"We are such stuff as dreams are made of!"

A ride of a few miles further brought us at length among the venerable and classic shades of Sherwood. Here I was delighted to find myself in a genuine wild wood, of primitive and natural growth, so rarely to be met with in this thickly peopled and highly cultivated country. It reminded me of the aboriginal forests of my native land. I rode through natural alleys and greenwood groves, carpeted with grass and shaded by lofty and beautiful birches. What most interested me, however, was to behold around me the mighty trunks of veteran oaks, old monumental trees, the patriarchs of Sherwood Forest. They were shattered, hollow, and moss-grown, it is true, and their "leafy honours" were nearly departed; but like mouldering towers they were noble and picturesque in their decay, and gave evidence, even in their ruins, of their ancient grandeur.

As I gazed about me upon these vestiges of once "Merrie Sherwood," the picturings of my boyish fancy began to rise in my mind, and Robin Hood and his men to stand before me.

"He clothed himself in scarlet then,
His men were all in green;
A finer show throughout the world
In no place could be seen.

Good lord! it was a gallant sight
To see them all in a row;
With every man a good broad-sword
And eke a good yew bow."

The horn of Robin Hood again seemed to resound through the forest. I saw this sylvan chivalry, half huntsmen, half

freebooters, trooping across the distant glades, or feasting and revelling beneath the trees; I was going on to embody in this way all the ballad scenes that had delighted me when a boy, when the distant sound of a wood-cutter's axe roused me from my day-dream.

The boding apprehensions which it awakened were too soon verified. I had not ridden much further, when I came to an open space where the work of destruction was going on. Around me lay the prostrate trunks of venerable oaks, once the towering and magnificent lords of the forest, and a number of wood-cutters were hacking and hewing at another gigantic tree, just tottering to its fall.

Alas for old Sherwood Forest! it had fallen into the possession of a noble agriculturist; a modern utilitarian, who had no feeling for poetry or forest scenery. In a little while and this glorious woodland will be laid low; its green glades be turned into sheep-walks; its legendary bowers supplanted by turnip-fields; and "Merrie Sherwood" will exist but in ballad and tradition.

"O for the poetical superstitions," thought I, "of the olden time! that shed a sanctity over every grove; that gave to each tree its tutelary genius or nymph, and threatened disaster to all who should molest the hamadryads in their leafy abodes. Alas! for the sordid propensities of modern days, when everything is coined into gold, and this once holiday planet of ours is turned into a mere 'working-day world.'"

My cobweb fancies put to flight, and my feelings out of tune, I left the forest in a far different mood from that in which I had entered it, and rode silently along until, on reaching the summit of a gentle eminence, the chime of evening bells came on the breeze across the heath, from a distant village.

I paused to listen.

"They are merely the evening bells of Mansfield," said my companion.

"Of Mansfield!" Here was another of the legendary names of this storied neighbourhood, that called up early and pleasant associations. The famous old ballad of "The King and the Miller of Mansfield" came at once to mind, and the chime of the bells put me again in good humour.

A little further on, and we were again on the traces of Robin Hood. Here was Fountain Dale, where he had his encounter with that stalwart shaveling Friar Tuck, who was a kind of saint militant, alternately wearing the casque and the cowl:—

"The curtal fryar kept Fountain Dale
Seven long years and more,
There was neither lord, knight, nor earl
Could make him yield before."

The moat is still shown which is said to have surrounded the stronghold of this jovial and fighting friar; and the place where he and Robin Hood had their sturdy trial of strength and prowess, in the memorable conflict which lasted

"From ten o'clock that very day
Until four in the afternoon,

and ended in the treaty of fellowship. As to the hardy feats, both of sword and trencher, performed by this "curtal fryar," behold, are they not recorded at length in the ancient ballads, and in the magic pages of "Ivanhoe?"

The evening was fast coming on, and the twilight thickening, as we rode through these haunts famous in outlaw story. A melancholy seemed to gather over the landscape as we proceeded, for our course lay by shadowy woods, and across naked heaths, and along lonely roads, marked by some of those sinister names by which the country people in England are apt to make dreary places still more dreary. The horrors of "Thieves' Wood," and the "Murderers' Stone," and "the Hag Nook," had all to be encountered in the gathering gloom of evening, and threatened to beset our path with more than mortal peril. Happily, however, we passed these ominous places unharmed, and arrived in safety at the portal of Newstead Abbey, highly satisfied with our greenwood foray.

THE ROOK CELL.

IN the course of my sojourn at the Abbey, I changed my quarters from the magnificent old state apartment haunted by Sir John Byron the Little, to another in a remote corner of the ancient edifice, immediately adjoining the ruined chapel. It possessed still more interest in my eyes, from having been the sleeping apartment of Lord Byron during his residence at the Abbey. The furniture remained the same. Here was the bed in which he slept, and which he had brought with him from college; its gilded posts surmounted by coronets, giving evidence of his aristocratical feelings. Here was likewise his college sofa; and about the walls were the portraits of his favourite butler, old Joe Murray; of his fancy acquaintance, Jackson the pugilist; together with pictures of Harrow School and the College at Cambridge, at which he was educated.

The bedchamber goes by the name of the Rook Cell, from its vicinity to the Rookery, which, since time immemorial, has maintained possession of a solemn grove adjacent to the chapel. This venerable community afforded me much food for speculation during my residence in this apartment. In the morning I used to hear them gradually waking and seeming to call each other up. After a time, the whole fraternity would be in a flutter; some balancing and swinging on the tree tops, others perched on the pinnacle of the Abbey church, or wheeling and hovering about in the air, and the ruined walls would reverberate with their incessant cawings. In this way they would linger about the rookery and its vicinity for the early part of the morning, when, having apparently mustered all their forces, called over the roll, and determined upon their line of march, they one and all would sail off in a long straggling flight to maraud the distant fields. They would forage the country for miles, and remain absent all day, excepting now and then a scout would come home, as if to see that all was well. Towards night the whole host might be seen, like a dark cloud in the distance, wanging their way homeward. They came, as it were, with whoop and halloo, wheeling high in the air above the Abbey, making various

evolutions before they alighted, and then keeping up an incessant cawing in the tree tops, until they gradually fell asleep.

It is remarked at the Abbey, that the rooks, though they sally forth on forays throughout the week, yet keep about the venerable edifice on Sundays, as if they had inherited a reverence for the day from their ancient *confrères*, the monks. Indeed, a believer in the metempsychosis might easily imagine these Gothic-looking birds to be the embodied souls of the ancient friars still hovering about their sanctified abode.

I dislike to disturb any point of popular and poetic faith, and was loth, therefore, to question the authenticity of this mysterious reverence for the Sabbath on the part of the Newstead rooks; but certainly, in the course of my sojourn in the Rook-Cell, I detected them in a flagrant outbreak and foray on a bright Sunday morning.

Beside the occasional clamour of the rookery, this remote apartment was often greeted with sounds of a different kind, from the neighbouring ruins. The great lancet window in front of the chapel adjoins the very wall of the chamber; and the mysterious sounds from it at night have been well described by Lord Byron:—

——— “ Now loud, now frantic,
The gale sweeps through its fretwork, and oft sings
The owl his anthem, when the silent quire
Lie with their hallelujahs quenched like fire.

But on the noontide of the moon, and when
The wind is winged from one point of heaven,
There moans a strange unearthly sound, which then
Is musical—a dying accent driven
Through the huge arch, which soars and sinks again.
Some deem it but the distant echo given
Back to the night wind by the waterfall,
And harmonised by the old choral wall.

Others, that some original shape or form,
Shaped by decay perchance, hath given the power
To this grey ruin, with a voice to charm.

Sad, but serene, it sweeps o'er tree or tower;
The cause I know not, nor can solve; but such
The fact:—I've heard it,—once perhaps too much.”

Never was a traveller in quest of the romantic in greater luck. I had, in sooth, got lodged in another haunted apart-

ment of the Abbey; for in this chamber Lord Byron declared he had more than once been harassed at midnight by a mysterious visitor. A black shapeless form would sit cowering upon his bed, and after gazing at him for a time with glaring eyes would roll off and disappear. The same uncouth apparition is said to have disturbed the slumbers of a newly-married couple that once passed their honey-moon in this apartment.

I would observe, that the access to the Rook Cell is by a spiral stone staircase leading up into it, as into a turret, from the long shadowy corridor over the cloisters, one of the midnight walks of the goblin friar. Indeed, to the fancies engendered in his brain in this remote and lonely apartment, incorporated with the floating superstitions of the Abbey, we are no doubt indebted for the spectral scene in "Don Juan."

"Then as the night was clear, though cold, he threw
His chamber door wide open — and went forth
Into a gallery, of sombre hue,
Long furnish'd with old pictures of great worth,
Of knights and dames, heroic and chaste too,
As doubtless should be people of high birth.

* * * * *

No sound except the echo of his sigh
Or step ran sadly through that antique house,
When suddenly he heard, or thought so, nigh,
A supernatural agent — or a mouse,
Whose little nibbling rustle will embarrass
Most people, as it plays along the arras.

It was no mouse, but lo! a monk, arrayed
In cowl, and beads, and dusky garb, appeared,
Now in the moonlight, and now lapsed in shade;
With steps that trod as heavy, yet unheard;
His garments only a slight murmur made;
He moved as shadowy as the sisters weird,
But slowly; and as he passed Juan by
Glared, without pausing, on him a bright eye.

Juan was petrified; he had heard a hint
Of such a spirit in these halls of old,
But thought, like most men, there was nothing in't
Beyond the rumour which such spots unfold,
Coin'd from surviving superstition's mint,
Which passes ghosts in currency like gold;
But rarely seen, like gold compared with paper.
And *did* he see this? or was it a vapour?

Once, twice, thrice pass'd, repass'd—the thing of air,
 Or earth beneath, or heaven, or t'other place;
 • And Juan gazed upon it with a stare,
 Yet could not speak or move; but, on its base
 As stands a statue, stood; he felt his hair
 Twine like a knot of snakes around his face;
 He tax'd his tongue for words, which were not granted.
 To ask the reverend person what he wanted.

The third time, after a still longer pause,
 The shadow pass'd away—but where? the hall
 Was long, and thus far there was no great cause
 To think his vanishing unnatural:
 Doors there were many, through which, by the laws
 Of physics, bodies, whether short or tall,
 Might come or go; but Juan could not state
 Through which the spectre seem'd to evaporate

He stood, how long he knew not, but it seem'd
 An age—expectant, powerless, with his eyes
 Strain'd on the spot where first the figure gleam'd;
 Then by degrees recall'd his energies,
 And would have pass'd the whole off as a dream.
 But could not wake; he was, he did surmise,
 Waking already, and return'd at length
 Back to his chamber, shorn of half his strength."

As I have already observed, it is difficult to determine whether Lord Byron was really subject to the superstitious fancies which have been imputed to him, or whether he merely amused himself by giving currency to them among his domestics and dependants. He certainly never scrupled to express a belief in supernatural visitations, both verbally and in his correspondence. If such were his foible, the Rook Cell was an admirable place to engender these delusions. As I have lain awake at night, I have heard all kinds of mysterious and sighing sounds from the neighbouring ruin. Distant footsteps, too, and the closing of doors in remote parts of the Abbey, would send hollow reverberations and echoes along the corridor and up the spiral staircase. Once, in fact, I was roused by a strange sound at the very door of my chamber. I threw it open, and a form "black and shapeless with glaring eyes" stood before me. It proved, however, neither ghost nor goblin, but my friend Roatswain, the great Newfoundland dog, who had conceived a companionable liking for me, and occasionally sought me in my apartment To the hauntings of even such

a visitant as honest Boatswain may we attribute some of the marvellous stories about the Goblin Friar.

THE LITTLE WHITE LADY.

IN the course of a morning's ride with Colonel Wildman about the Abbey lands, we found ourselves in one of the prettiest little wild-woods imaginable. The road to it had led us among rocky ravines overhung with thickets, and now wound through birchen dingles and among beautiful groves and clumps of elms and beeches. A limpid rill of sparkling water, winding and doubling in perplexed mazes, crossed our path repeatedly, so as to give the wood the appearance of being watered by numerous rivulets. The solitary and romantic look of this piece of woodland, and the frequent recurrence of its mazy stream, put him in mind, Colonel Wildman said, of the little German fairy tale of "Undine," in which is recorded the adventures of a knight who had married a water-nymph. As he rode with his bride through her native woods, every stream claimed her as a relative; one was a brother, another an uncle, another a cousin.

We rode on amusing ourselves with applying this fanciful tale to the charming scenery around us, until we came to a lowly grey-stone farmhouse, of ancient date, situated in a solitary glen, on the margin of the brook, and overshadowed by venerable trees. It went by the name, as I was told, of the Weir Mill farmhouse. With this rustic mansion was connected a little tale of real life, some circumstances of which were related to me on the spot, and others I collected in the course of my sojourn at the Abbey.

Not long after Colonel Wildman had purchased the estate of Newstead, he made it a visit for the purpose of planning repairs and alterations. As he was rambling one evening, about dusk, in company with his architect, through this little piece of woodland, he was struck with its peculiar characteristics, and then, for the first time, compared it to the haunted wood of Undine. While he was making the remark, a small female figure, in white, flitted by without speaking a word, or

indeed appearing to notice them. Her step was scarcely heard as she passed, and her form was indistinct in the twilight.

‘What a figure for a fairy or sprite!’ exclaimed Colonel Wildman. ‘How much a poet or a romance writer would make of such an apparition, at such a time and in such a place!’

He began to congratulate himself upon having some elfin inhabitant for his haunted wood, when, on proceeding a few paces, he found a white frill lying in the path, which had evidently fallen from the figure that had just passed.

‘Well,’ said he, ‘after all, this is neither sprite nor fairy, but a being of flesh, and blood, and muslin.’

Continuing on, he came to where the road passed by an old mill in front of the Abbey. The people of the mill were at the door. He paused and inquired whether any visitor had been at the Abbey, but was answered in the negative.

‘Has nobody passed by here?’

‘No one, sir.’

‘That’s strange! Surely I met a female in white, who must have passed along this path?’

‘Oh, sir, you mean the Little White Lady! Oh, yes, she passed by here not long since.’

‘The Little White Lady! And pray who is the Little White Lady?’

‘Why, sir, that nobody knows. She lives in the Weir Mill farmhouse, down in the skirts of the wood. She comes to the Abbey every morning, keeps about it all day, and goes away at night. She speaks to nobody, and we are rather shy of her, for we don’t know what to make of her.’

Colonel Wildman now concluded that it was some artist or amateur employed in making sketches of the Abbey, and thought no more about the matter. He went to London, and was absent for some time. In the interim, his sister, who was newly married, came with her husband to pass the honeymoon at the Abbey. The Little White Lady still resided in the Weir Mill farmhouse, on the border of the haunted wood, and continued her visits daily to the Abbey. Her dress was always the same—a white gown with a little black spencer or bodice, and a white hat with a short veil that screened the upper part of her countenance. Her habits were shy, lonely, and silent; she spoke to no one, and sought no companion-

ship, excepting with the Newfoundland dog that had belonged to Lord Byron. His friendship she secured by caressing him and occasionally bringing him food, and he became the companion of her solitary walks. She avoided all strangers, and wandered about the retired parts of the garden, sometimes sitting for hours by the tree on which Lord Byron had carved his name, or at the foot of the monument which he had erected among the ruins of the chapel. Sometimes she read, sometimes she wrote with a pencil on a small slate which she carried with her, but much of her time was passed in a kind of reverie.

The people about the place gradually became accustomed to her, and suffered her to wander about unmolested; their distrust of her subsided on discovering that most of her peculiar and lonely habits arose from the misfortune of being deaf and dumb. Still she was regarded with some degree of shyness, for it was the common opinion that she was not exactly in her right mind.

Colonel Wildman's sister was informed of all these circumstances by the servants of the Abbey, among whom the Little White Lady was a theme of frequent discussion. The Abbey and its monastic environs being haunted ground, it was natural that a mysterious visitant of the kind, and one supposed to be under the influence of mental hallucination, should inspire awe in a person unaccustomed to the place. As Colonel Wildman's sister was one day walking along a broad terrace of the garden, she suddenly beheld the Little White Lady coming towards her, and, in the surprise and agitation of the moment, turned and ran into the house.

Day after day now elapsed, and nothing more was seen of this singular personage. Colonel Wildman at length arrived at the Abbey, and his sister mentioned to him her rencounter and fright in the garden. It brought to mind his own adventure with the Little White Lady in the wood of Undine, and he was surprised to find that she still continued her mysterious wanderings about the Abbey. The mystery was soon explained. Immediately after his arrival he received a letter, written in the most minute and delicate female hand, and in elegant and even eloquent language: it was from the Little White Lady. She had noticed and been shocked by

the abrupt retreat of Colonel Wildman's sister on seeing her in the garden-walk, and expressed her unhappiness at being an object of alarm to any of his family. She explained the motives of her frequent and long visits to the Abbey, which proved to be a singularly enthusiastic idolatry of the genius of Lord Byron, and a solitary and passionate delight in haunting the scenes he had once inhabited. She hinted at the infirmities which cut her off from all social communion with her fellow-beings, and at her situation in life as desolate and bereaved; and concluded by hoping that he would not deprive her of her only comfort—the permission of visiting the Abbey occasionally, and lingering about the walks and gardens.

Colonel Wildman now made further inquiries concerning her, and found that she was a great favourite with the people of the farmhouse where she boarded, from the gentleness, quietude, and innocence of her manners. When at home, she passed the greater part of her time in a small sitting-room, reading and writing.

Colonel Wildman immediately called on her at the farmhouse. She received him with some agitation and embarrassment, but his frankness and urbanity soon put her at her ease. She was past the bloom of youth, a pale, nervous little being, and apparently deficient in most of her physical organs; for, in addition to being deaf and dumb, she saw but imperfectly. They carried on a communication by means of a small slate which she drew out of her reticule, and on which they wrote their questions and replies. In writing or reading she always approached her eyes close to the written characters.

This defective organisation was accompanied by a morbid sensibility almost amounting to disease. She had not been born deaf and dumb, but had lost her hearing in a fit of sickness, and with it the power of distinct articulation. Her life had evidently been chequered and unhappy; she was apparently without family or friend—a lonely, desolate being, cut off from society by her infirmities.

"I am always amongst strangers," said she,—“as much so in my native country as I could be in the remotest parts of the world. By all I am considered as a stranger and an

alien; no one will acknowledge any connexion with me; I seem not to belong to the human species."

Such were the circumstances that Colonel Wildman was able to draw forth in the course of his conversation, and they strongly interested him in favour of this poor enthusiast. He was too devout an admirer of Lord Byron himself not to sympathise in this extraordinary zeal of one of his votaries, and he entreated her to renew her visits to the Abbey, assuring her that the edifice and its grounds should always be open to her.

The Little White Lady now resumed her daily walks in the Monks' Garden, and her occasional seat at the foot of the monument; she was shy and diffident, however, and evidently fearful of intruding. If any persons were walking in the garden, she would avoid them and seek the most remote parts, and was seen like a sprite, only by gleams and glimpses, as she glided among the groves and thickets. Many of her feelings and fancies, during these lonely rambles, were embodied in verse, noted down on her tablet, and transferred to paper in the evening, on her return to the farmhouse. Some of these verses now lie before me, written with considerable harmony of versification, but chiefly curious as being illustrative of that singular and enthusiastic idolatry with which she almost worshipped the genius of Byron, or, rather, the romantic image of him formed by her imagination.

Two or three extracts may not be unacceptable. The following are from a long rhapsody addressed to Lord Byron:—

"By what dread charm thou ruiest the mind
It is not given for us to know;
We glow with feelings undefined,
Nor can explain from whence they flow.

Not that fond love which passion breathes,
And youthful hearts inflame;
The soul a nobler homage gives,
And bows to thy great name.

Of't have we own'd the Muses' skill,
And proved the power of song;
But sweetest notes ne'er woke the thrill
That solely to thy verse belong.

This, but far more, for thee we prove —
 Something that bears a holier name
 Than the pure dream of early love,
 Or friendship's nobler flame —

Something divine — Oh! what it is
Thy muse alone can tell —
 So sweet, but so profound the bliss,
 We dread to break the spell."

This singular and romantic infatuation — for such it might truly be called — was entirely spiritual and ideal; for, as she herself declares in another of her rhapsodies, she had never beheld Lord Byron: he was, to her, a mere phantom of the brain:—

"I ne'er have drunk thy glance — thy form
 My earthly eye has never seen,
 Though oft, when fancy's visions warm,
 It greets me in some blissful dream;

Greets me as greets the sainted seer
 Some radiant visitant from high,
 When heaven's own strains break on his ear,
 And wrap his soul in ecstasy."

Her poetical wanderings and musings were not confined to the Abbey grounds, but extended to all parts of the neighbourhood connected with the memory of Lord Byron, and, among the rest, to the groves and gardens of Annesley Hall, the seat of his early passion for Miss Chaworth. One of her poetical effusions mentions her having seen, from Howet's Hill, in Annesley Park, a "sylph-like form," in a car drawn by milk-white horses, passing by the foot of the hill, who proved to be the "favourite child" seen by Lord Byron in his memorable interview with Miss Chaworth after her marriage. That favourite child was now a blooming girl approaching to womanhood, and seems to have understood something of the character and story of this singular visitant, and to have treated her with gentle sympathy. The Little White Lady expresses in touching terms, in a note to her verses, her sense of this gentle courtesy. "The benevolent condescension," says she, "of that amiable and interesting young lady to the unfortunate writer of these simple lines will remain engraved upon a grateful memory till the vital

spark that now animates a heart that too sensibly feels, and too seldom experiences such kindness, is for ever extinct."

In the meantime Colonel Wildman, in occasional interviews, had obtained further particulars of the story of the stranger, and found that poverty was added to the other evils of her forlorn and isolated state. Her name was Sophia Hyatt; she was the daughter of a country bookseller, but both her parents had died several years before. At their death her sole dependence was upon her brother, who allowed her a small annuity on her share of the property left by their father, and which remained in his hands. Her brother, who was a captain of a merchant vessel, removed with his family to America, leaving her almost alone in the world; for she had no other relative in England but a cousin, of whom she knew almost nothing. She received her annuity regularly for a time; but, unfortunately, her brother died in the West Indies, leaving his affairs in confusion, and his estate overhung by several commercial claims, which threatened to swallow up the whole. Under these disastrous circumstances her annuity suddenly ceased; she had in vain tried to obtain a renewal of it from the widow, or even an account of the state of her brother's affairs. Her letters, for three years past, had remained unanswered; and she would have been exposed to the horrors of the most abject want, but for a pittance quarterly doled out to her by her cousin in England.

Colonel Wildman entered, with characteristic benevolence, into the story of her troubles; he saw that she was a helpless, unprotected being, unable, from her infirmities and her ignorance of the world, to prosecute her just claims. He obtained from her the address of her relations in America, and of the commercial connexion of her brother; promised, through the medium of his own agents in Liverpool, to institute an inquiry into the situation of her brother's affairs, and to forward any letters she might write, so as to ensure their reaching their place of destination.

Inspired with some faint hopes, the Little White Lady continued her wanderings about the Abbey and its neighbourhood. The delicacy and timidity of her deportment increased the interest already felt for her by Mrs. Wildman.

That lady, with her wonted kindness, sought to make acquaintance with her, and inspire her with confidence. She invited her into the Abbey, treated her with the most delicate attention, and, seeing that she had a great turn for reading, offered her the loan of any books in her possession. She borrowed a few, particularly the works of Sir Walter Scott, but soon returned them. The writings of Lord Byron seemed to form the only study in which she delighted; and when not occupied in reading those, her time was passed in passionate meditations on his genius. Her enthusiasm spread an ideal world around her, in which she moved and existed as in a dream, forgetful at times of the real miseries which beset her in her mortal state.

One of her rhapsodies is, however, of a very melancholy cast, anticipating her own death, which her fragile frame and growing infirmities rendered but too probable. It is headed by the following paragraph:—

“Written beneath the tree on Crowholt Hill, where it is my wish to be interred if I should die in Newstead.”

I subjoin a few of the stanzas; they are addressed to Lord Byron:—

“Thou, while thou stand'st beneath this tree,
While by thy foot this earth is press'd,
Think, Here the wanderer's ashes be,
And wilt thou say, Sweet be thy rest?
* * * *

'Twould add even to a seraph's bliss,
Whose sacred charge thou then may be,
To guide — to guard — yes, Byron! yes,
That glory is reserved for me.

If woes below may plead above
A frail heart's errors, mine forgiven,
To that 'high world' I soar, where 'love
Surviving' forms the bliss of heaven.

Oh, wheresoe'er, in realms above,
Assign'd my spirit's new abode,
'Twill watch thee with a seraph's love,
Till thou too soar'st to meet thy God!

And here, beneath this lonely tree,
Beneath the earth thy feet have press'd,
My dust shall sleep — once dear to thee
These scenes — here may the wanderer rest!”

In the midst of her reveries and rhapsodies, tidings reached Newstead of the untimely death of Lord Byron. How they were received by this humble but passionate devotee I could not ascertain; her life was too obscure and lonely to furnish much personal anecdote, but among her poetical effusions are several written in a broken and irregular manner, and evidently under great agitation.

The following sonnet is the most coherent and most descriptive of her peculiar state of mind:—

“Well, thou art gone—but what wert thou to me?

I never saw thee—never heard thy voice,
Yet my soul seemed to claim affiance with thee.

The Roman bard has sung of fields Elysian,
Where the soul sojourns ere she visits earth;

Sure it was there my spirit knew thee, Byron
Thine image haunteth me like a past vision;

It hath enshrined itself in my heart's core;
’Tis my soul's soul—it fills the whole creation.

For I do live but in that world ideal
Which the muse peopleth with her bright fancies,

And of that world thou art a monarch real,
Nor ever earthly sceptre ruled a kingdom

With sway so potent as thy lyre, the mind's dominion.”

Taking all the circumstances here adduced into consideration, it is evident that this strong excitement and exclusive occupation of the mind upon one subject, operating upon a system in a high state of morbid irritability, was in danger of producing that species of mental derangement called monomania. The poor little being was aware herself of the dangers of her case, and alluded to it in the following passage of a letter to Colonel Wildman, which presents one of the most lamentable pictures of anticipated evil ever conjured up by the human mind.

“I have long,” writes she, “too sensibly felt the decay of my mental faculties, which I consider as the certain indication of that dreaded calamity which I anticipate with such horror. A strange idea has long haunted my mind, that Swift's dreadful fate will be mine. It is not ordinary insanity I so much apprehend, but something worse—absolute idiotism!

“Oh, sir! think what I must suffer from such an idea, without an earthly friend to look up to for protection in such

a wretched state—exposed to the indecent insults which such spectacles always excite. But I dare not dwell upon the thought; it would facilitate the event I so much dread, and contemplate with horror. Yet I cannot help thinking from people's behaviour to me at times, and from after-reflections upon my conduct, that symptoms of the disease are already apparent."

Five months passed away, but the letters written by her, and forwarded by Colonel Wildman to America, relative to her brother's affairs, remained unanswered; the inquiries instituted by the Colonel had as yet proved equally fruitless. A deeper gloom and despondency now seemed to gather upon her mind. She began to talk of leaving Newstead, and repairing to London, in the vague hope of obtaining relief or redress by instituting some legal process to ascertain and enforce the will of her deceased brother. Weeks elapsed, however, before she could summon up sufficient resolution to tear herself away from the scene of poetical fascination. The following simple stanzas, selected from a number written about the time, express in humble rhymes the melancholy that preyed upon her spirits:—

"Farewell to thee, Newstead! thy time-riven towers
Shall meet the fond gaze of the pilgrim no more;
No more may she roam through thy walks and thy bowers,
Nor muse in thy cloisters at eve's pensive hour.

Oh, how shall I leave you, ye hills and ye dales,
When lost in sad musing—though sad, not unblest—
A lone pilgrim I stray—Ah! in these lovely vales,
I hoped, vainly hoped, that the pilgrim might rest.

Yet rest is far distant—in the dark vale of death
Alone shall I find it, an outcast forlorn.
But hence, vain complaints, though by fortune bereft
Of all that could solace in life's early morn.

Is not man from his birth doomed a pilgrim to roam
O'er the world's dreary wilds? whence, by fortune's rude gust
In his path, if some flowret of joy chance to bloom,
It is torn and its foliage laid low in the dust."

At length she fixed upon a day for her departure. On the day previous, she paid a farewell visit to the Abbey; wandering over every part of the grounds and garden; pausing

and lingering at every place particularly associated with the recollection of Lord Byron; and passing a long time seated at the foot of the monument, which she used to call "her altar." Seeking Mrs. Wildman, she placed in her hands a sealed packet, with an earnest request that she would not open it until after her departure from the neighbourhood. This done, she took an affectionate leave of her, and with many bitter tears bade farewell to the Abbey.

On retiring to her room that evening, Mrs. Wildman could not refrain from inspecting the legacy of this singular being. On opening the packet, she found a number of fugitive poems, written in a most delicate and minute hand, and evidently the fruits of her reveries and meditations during her lonely rambles: from these the foregoing extracts have been made. These were accompanied by a voluminous letter, written with the pathos and eloquence of genuine feeling, and depicting her peculiar situation and singular state of mind in dark but painful colours.

"The last time," says she, "that I had the pleasure of seeing you in the garden, you asked me why I leave Newstead, when I told you my circumstances obliged me; the expression of concern which I fancied I observed in your look and manner would have encouraged me to have been explicit at the time, but from my inability of expressing myself verbally."

She then goes on to detail precisely her pecuniary circumstances, by which it appears that her whole dependence for subsistence was on an allowance of thirteen pounds a-year from her cousin, who bestowed it through a feeling of pride, lest his relative should come upon the parish. During two years this pittance had been augmented from other sources to twenty-three pounds, but the last year it had shrunk within its original bounds, and was yielded so grudgingly that she could not feel sure of its continuance from one quarter to another. More than once it had been withheld on slight pretences, and she was in constant dread lest it should be entirely withdrawn.

"It is with extreme reluctance," observes she, "that I have so far exposed my unfortunate situation; but I thought you expected to know something more of it, and I feared that

Colonel Wildman, deceived by appearances, might think that I am in no immediate want, and that the delay of a few weeks, or months, respecting the inquiry, can be of no material consequence. It is absolutely necessary to the success of the business that Colonel Wildman should know the exact state of my circumstances without reserve, that he may be enabled to make a correct representation of them to any gentlemen whom he intends to interest, who, I presume, if they are not of America themselves, have some connexions there, through whom my friends may be convinced of the reality of my distress, if they pretend to doubt it, as I suppose they do: but to be more explicit is impossible; it would be too humiliating to particularise the circumstances of the embarrassment in which I am unhappily involved—my utter destitution. To disclose all might, too, be liable to an inference, which I hope I am not so devoid of delicacy, or natural pride, as to endure the thought of. Pardon me, madam, for thus giving trouble where I have no right to do—compelled to throw myself upon Colonel Wildman's humanity, to entreat his earnest exertions in my behalf, for it is now my only resource. Yet do not too much despise me for thus submitting to imperious necessity—it is not love of life, believe me it is not, nor anxiety for its preservation. I cannot say, 'There are things that make the world dear to me;' for in the world there is not an object to make *me* wish to linger here another hour, could I find that rest and peace in the grave which I have never found on earth, and I fear will be denied me there."

Another part of her letter developes more completely the dark despondency hinted at in the conclusion of the foregoing extract, and presents a lamentable instance of a mind diseased, which sought in vain, amidst sorrow and calamity, the sweet consolations of religious faith.

"That my existence has hitherto been prolonged," says she, "often beyond what I have thought to have been its destined period, is astonishing to myself. Often when my situation has been as desperate, as hopeless, or more so, if possible, than it is at present, some unexpected interposition of Providence has rescued me from a fate that has appeared inevitable. I do not particularly allude to recent circumstances or latter years, for from my earlier years I have been

the child of Providence—then why should I distrust its care now? I do not distrust it—neither do I trust it. ‘I feel perfectly unanxious, unconcerned, and indifferent as to the future; but this is not trust in Providence—not that trust which alone claims its protection. I know this is a blameable indifference—it is more—for it reaches to the interminable future. It turns almost with disgust from the bright prospects which religion offers for the consolation and support of the wretched, and to which I was early taught, by an almost adored mother, to look forward with hope and joy; but to me they can afford no consolation. Not that I doubt the sacred truths that religion inculcates. I cannot doubt—though I confess I have sometimes tried to do so, because I no longer wish for that immortality of which it assures us. My only wish now is for rest and peace—endless rest. ‘For rest—but not to feel ’tis rest.’ But I cannot delude myself with the hope that such rest will be my lot. I feel an internal evidence, stronger than any arguments that reason or religion can enforce, that I have that within me which is imperishable; that drew not its origin from the ‘clod of the valley.’ With this conviction, but with a hope to brighten the prospect of that dread future,—

‘I dare not look beyond the tomb,
Yet cannot hope for peace before.’

“Such an unhappy frame of mind, I am sure, madam, must excite your commiseration. It is perhaps owing, in part at least, to the solitude in which I have lived, I may say, even in the midst of society, when I have mixed in it, as my infirmities entirely exclude me from that sweet intercourse of kindred spirits—that sweet solace of refined conversation; the little intercourse I have at any time with those around me cannot be termed conversation—they are not kindred spirits—and even where circumstances have associated me (but rarely indeed) with superior and cultivated minds, who have not disdained to admit me to their society, they could not by all their generous efforts, even, in early youth, lure from my dark soul the thoughts that loved to lie buried there, nor inspire me with the courage to attempt their disclosure; and yet of all the pleasures of polished life which

fancy has often pictured to me in such vivid colours, there is not one that I have so ardently coveted as that sweet reciprocation of ideas, the supreme bliss of enlightened minds in the hour of social converse. But this I knew was not decreed for me—

• ‘Yet this was in my nature——’

but since the loss of my hearing, I have always been incapable of verbal conversation. I need not, however, inform you, madam, of this. At the first interview with which you favoured me, you quickly discovered my peculiar unhappiness in this respect; you perceived, from my manner, that any attempt to draw me into conversation would be in vain—had it been otherwise, perhaps you would not have disdained now and then to have soothed the lonely wanderer with yours. I have sometimes fancied, when I have seen you in the walk, that you seemed to wish to encourage me to throw myself in your way. Pardon me if my imagination, too apt to beguile me with such dear illusions, has deceived me into too presumptuous an idea here. You must have observed that I generally endeavoured to avoid both you and Colonel Wildman. It was to spare your generous hearts the pain of witnessing distress you could not alleviate. Thus cut off, as it were, from all human society, I have been compelled to live in a world of my own, and certainly with the beings with which my world is peopled I am at no loss to converse. But, though I love solitude, and am never in want of subjects to amuse my fancy, yet solitude too much indulged in must necessarily have an unhappy effect upon the mind, which, when left to seek for resources wholly within itself, will unavoidably in hours of gloom and despondency brood over corroding thoughts that prey upon the spirits, and sometimes terminate in confirmed misanthropy—especially with those who, from constitution or early misfortunes, are inclined to melancholy, and to view human nature in its dark shades. And have I not cause for gloomy reflections? The utter loneliness of my lot would alone have rendered existence a curse to one whose heart nature has formed glowing with all the warmth of social affection, yet without an object on which to place it—without one natural connexion, one earthly friend to appeal to, to

shield me from the contempt, indignities, and insults, to which my deserted situation continually exposed me."

I am giving long extracts from this letter, yet I cannot refrain from subjoining another letter, which depicts her feelings with respect to Newstead :—

"Permit me, madam, again to request your and Colone Wildman's acceptance of those acknowledgments, which I cannot too often repeat, for your unexampled goodness to a rude stranger. I know I ought not to have taken advantage of your extreme good-nature so frequently as I have. I should have absented myself from your garden during the stay of the company at the Abbey, but, as I knew I must be gone long before they would leave it, I could not deny myself the indulgence, as you so freely gave me your permission to continue my walks : but now they are at an end. I have taken my last farewell of every dear and interesting spot, which I now never hope to see again, unless my disembodied spirit may be permitted to revisit them. Yet oh, if Providence should enable me again to support myself with any degree of respectability, and you should grant me some little humble shed, with what joy shall I return and renew my delightful rambles ! But, dear as Newstead is to me, I will never again come under the same unhappy circumstances as I have this last time—never without the means of at least securing myself from contempt. How dear, how very dear Newstead is to me, how unconquerable the infatuation that possesses me, I am now going to give a too convincing proof. In offering to your acceptance the worthless trifles that will accompany this, I hope you will believe that I have no view to your amusement. I dare not hope that the consideration of their being the products of your own garden, and most of them written there, in my little tablet, while sitting at the foot of *my Altar*—I could not, I cannot resist the earnest desire of leaving this memorial of the many happy hours I have there enjoyed. Oh ! do not reject them, madam ; suffer them to remain with you, and if you should deign to honour them with a perusal, when you read them repress, if you can, the smile that I know will too naturally arise, when you recollect the appearance of the wretched being who has dared to devote her whole soul to the contemplation of such more

than human excellence. Yet, ridiculous as such devotion may appear to some, I must take leave to say, that if the sentiments which I have entertained for that exalted being could be duly appreciated, I trust they would be found to be of such a nature as is no dishonour even for him to have inspired."

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"I am now coming to take a last, last view of scenes too deeply impressed upon my memory ever to be effaced, even by madness itself. O madam! may you never know, nor be able to conceive, the agony I endure in tearing myself from all that the world contains of dear and sacred to me: the only spot on earth where I can ever hope for peace or comfort. May every blessing the world has to bestow attend you, or rather, may you long, long live in the enjoyment of the delights of your own paradise, in secret seclusion from a world that has no real blessings to bestow. Now I go—but oh, might I dare to hope that when you are enjoying these blissful scenes, a thought of the unhappy wanderer might sometimes cross your mind: how soothing would such an idea be, if I dared to indulge it. Could you see my heart at this moment, how needless would it be to assure you of the respectful gratitude, the affectionate esteem, this heart must ever bear you both."

The effect of this letter upon the sensitive heart of Mrs. Wildman may be more readily conceived than expressed. Her first impulse was to give a home to this poor homeless being, and to fix her in the midst of those scenes which formed her earthly paradise. She communicated her wishes to Colonel Wildman, and they met with an immediate response in his generous bosom. It was settled on the spot that an apartment should be fitted up for the Little White Lady in one of the new farm-houses, and every arrangement made for her comfortable and permanent maintenance on the estate. With a woman's prompt benevolence, Mrs. Wildman, before she laid her head upon her pillow, wrote the following letter to the destitute stranger:

"Newstead Abbey,
Tuesday Night, Sept. 20th, 1825.

"On retiring to my bedchamber this evening I have

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opened your letter, and cannot lose a moment in expressing to you the strong interest which it has excited both in Colonel Wildman and myself, from the details of your peculiar situation, and the delicate, and, let me add, elegant language in which they are conveyed. I am anxious that my note should reach you previous to your departure from this neighbourhood, and should be truly happy if, by any arrangement for your accommodation, I could prevent the necessity of your undertaking the journey. Colonel Wildman begs me to assure you that he will use his best exertion in the investigation of those matters which you have confided to him, and should you remain here at present, or return again after a short absence, I trust we shall find means to become better acquainted, and to convince you of the interest I feel, and the real satisfaction it would afford me to contribute in any way to your comfort and happiness. I will only now add my thanks for the little packet which I received with your letter, and I must confess that the letter has so entirely engaged my attention, that I have not as yet had time for the attentive perusal of its companion.

Believe me, dear madam,
with sincere good wishes,

Yours truly,

LOUISA WILDMAN.

Early the next morning a servant was dispatched with the letter to the Weir Mill farm, but returned with the information that the Little White Lady had set off before his arrival, in company with the farmer's wife, in a cart for Nottingham, to take her place in the coach for London. Mrs. Wildman ordered him to mount horse instantly, follow with all speed, and deliver the letter into her hand before the departure of the coach.

The bearer of good tidings spared neither whip nor spur, and arrived at Nottingham on a gallop. On entering the town a crowd obstructed him in the principal street. He checked his horse to make his way through it quietly. As the crowd opened to the right and left, he beheld a human body lying on the pavement—it was the corpse of the Little White Lady!

It seems that on arriving in town and dismounting from the cart, the farmer's wife had parted with her to go on an errand, and the White Lady continued on toward the coach-office. In crossing a street a cart came along, driven at a rapid rate. The driver called out to her, but she was too deaf to hear his voice or the rattling of his cart. In an instant she was knocked down by the horse, the wheels passed over her body, and she died without a groan.

APPENDIX.

THE following animated description of Newstead is taken, by permission of the proprietor, from a pleasing little volume entitled "A Visit to Sherwood Forest." As it corrects an error into which Mr. Irving has fallen, and is, besides, usefully illustrative of his work, we deem it a valuable addition.

"One of the most interesting places in the kingdom, whether regarded as the ancestral and fondly-loved domain of a mighty poet, immortalized by his repeated and ardent apostrophes in its praise and to its memory, or from being in itself, in the words of Washington Irving, 'one of the finest specimens in existence of those quaint and romantic piles, half castle, half convent, which remain as monuments of the olden times of England. It stands, too, in the midst of a legendary neighbourhood, being in the heart of Sherwood Forest, and surrounded by the haunts of Robin Hood and his band of outlaws, so famous in ancient ballad and nursery tale!'

"It was a fine autumnal morning that I sallied from my pleasant quarters at Mansfield upon this long-anticipated pilgrimage, and after a walk for about four miles upon the Nottingham turnpike-road, mostly bounded by extensive woods, occasionally relieved by heathery glades and patches of cultivation, and passing within a few score yards a place of no less celebrity than Fountain Dale, once abode of the 'Saint militant,' Friar Tuck, I arrived at an inn called 'The Hut,' lately rebuilt in old English style, and which stands by

the road-side but a few yards from the entrance to Newstead Park, for the accommodation of the numerous parties who arrive to visit the Abbey.

‘Immediately in front of the park-gates stands a magnificent oak-tree, a remnant of the old forest, and which was preserved from destruction by the liberality and good taste of several gentlemen of Mansfield, who purchased it of the poet’s grand-uncle and immediate predecessor, William, fifth, or, as he is called, ‘the wicked’ Lord Byron, in order to prevent it sharing the fate which he, from pecuniary or too probably malignant motives, ruthlessly dealt out to hundreds of its noble and majestic brethren. The growth of this tree, as if conscious of its importance, has been so supremely beautiful, both as regards shape and the extent of its spreading branches, that it cannot fail to call forth admiration.

“Leaving the hut and turnpike-road, the way led through the wilder portion of the park for about a mile, when, as though by enchantment, a most glorious scene burst upon the view. On the right hand lay a splendid sheet of water, fringed with young woods that bow their whispering homage o’er the margin—

‘Her great bright eye, all silently,
Up to the sky was cast,’

reflecting all the depth and brightness of the tranquil heavens; aquatic wild birds studded the silvery surface, as though they had a ‘vested interest’ in the place, and possessed a ‘protection order’ against all molestation. A romantic waterfall and the ruins of a rustic mill, together with the gentle murmuring of the foaming falls, added to the richly-wooded country around, served to complete a picture upon which Memory, so long as ‘she holds her seat,’ will love to dwell.

“Turning to the left, the venerable Abbey rises in solemn grandeur, the long and lovely ivy clinging fondly to the rich tracery of a former age. You, in whom the poetic temperament is strong, would, I know, pardon any expressions of enthusiasm that I might indulge in; but such feelings have been so often and so well ‘done,’ that I leave you only to conceive what every man must feel as he gazes for the first time upon these walls, and remembers that it was here, even

amid the comparative ruins of a building once dedicated to the sacred cause of Religion and her twin-sister Charity, that the genius of Byron was first developed. Here that he paced with youthful melancholy the halls of his illustrious ancestors, and trod the sombre walks of the long-banished monks. Feeling as he expressed—

'Newstead! fast falling, once resplendent dome.
Religious shrine! repentant Henry's* pride!
Of Warriors, Monks, and Danes, the cloistered tomb,
Whose pensive shades around thy ruins glide.
Hail to thy pile! more honour'd in the fall
Than modern mansions in their pillar'd state;
Proudly majestic frowns thy vaulted hall,
Scowling defiance on the blasts of fate.'

"Newstead Abbey was founded by Henry the Second, in or about the year 1170, as a priory of Black Canons, an order having for their tutelary patron St. Augustine, and professing great austerity of life and practice. It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and there is still situated, in a conspicuous niche of the chapel ruin, a sculptured Virgin and Child, which, with many other specimens of early English sculpture, is still in a beautiful state of preservation. It continued to be a priory of some importance until the time of Henry the Eighth, who, in his zeal for the temporal welfare of himself, and to the consternation of the then 'religious world,' set about the wholesale destruction of the monastic institutions of the country. Newstead, whose revenues were then valued at 219*l.* 18*s.* 8*d.*, was too choice a morsel to be overlooked, and it consequently fell a victim to the monarch's cupidity and sacrilege, and those venerable doors, which had for centuries been open for the reception of the poor, the sick, and the way-worn, became closed to their prayers and cries.

"Being granted by the same royal favour to Sir John Byron, who, at that time, held the distinguished and important appointment of lieutenant of the forest of Sherwood, it was most likely held by him as an official residence; at all events, he converted it into one of more than ordinary

* Henry the Second founded Newstead immediately after the murder of Thomas à Becket.

splendour. During the troubles which marked the history of the Great Rebellion, which ended in the martyrdom of the unfortunate and pious King Charles the First, the Byrons distinguished themselves as warm adherents of royalty, and Newstead bravely sustained a siege from the Parliamentarians; thus, as Lord Byron sings—

‘The Abbey once, a regal fortress now,
Encircled by insulting rebel powers;
War’s dread machines o’erhang thy threatening brow,
And dart destruction in sulphureous showers.’

“The ‘Roundheads’ were not the men either to forgive or forget, and therefore, on the death of Charles, the Byron estates, including Newstead, were placed under sequestration, in company with a host of other delinquents’ estates.

“During the Civil War, in 1643, Charles the First marked his high sense of Sir John Byron’s loyalty and devotion by raising him to the peerage; and immediately after the restoration, Charles the Second restored the sequestered estates to their former owner, from whom they passed by descent to the late Lord Byron, who sold the abbey and estate (consisting of nearly 4000 acres) in 1815, to T. Clawton, Esq., for 140,000*l.* who was unable to make good the purchase.

“The present esteemed owner, Colonel Wildman, purchased them in 1818 of Lord Byron, for about 100,000*l.*, and has since, by his judicious alterations and improvements, proved himself a most worthy owner of a place at once the pride of the forest, and the admiration of thousands who have, by his courtesy, been permitted to traverse its spacious galleries and venerable halls.

“Not only has the gallant Colonel laid out immense sums in its restoration and adornment, and the increase of its ornamental grounds, but he has rebuilt nearly every farmhouse upon the estate.

“At one time the park was of immense extent, containing no less than 2700 head of deer, who could browse in uninterrupted seclusion beneath the shades of the broad-spreading oaks, for which this part of the forest was renowned; but the hand which destroyed the noble timber of the estate was influenced also by the same motives to deal death and destruction amongst these graceful creatures, and that to such an

extent that the carcasses were for a length of time exposed for sale in Mansfield Market, as commonly and at as cheap a rate as forest mutton, until the whole of the noble herd was literally exterminated.

"The upper lake is formed by obstructing the waters of a small river, Leen—a work, probably, of almost equal antiquity with the Abbey itself. It was the old mill-dam of the monks by which their corn-mill was worked, and it possesses as many traditions and fables as every other part of this romance-haunted valley.

"These chiefly relate to the treasures which are supposed to lie in its depths, and to the pranks of the 'wicked' old Lord, who, by the way, built the mimic fortifications on each side,—a poor compensation for the destruction of the ancient timber which then surrounded it. The present rising woods were, in excellent taste, planted by the late Lord Byron.

"A large brazen eagle and pedestal of antique workmanship was some years ago fished up from the bottom of the lake, and which, on being cleaned, was found to contain in the hollow pedestal a number of parchment deeds and grants, bearing the seals of Edward the Third and Henry the Eighth, which had, no doubt, been thus sunk by the friars, for safety in some perilous time.

"One of the deeds thus discovered, with the great Seal of England attached, is erroneously described by Washington Irving as an 'indulgence,' or plenary pardon, for all crimes the friars might choose to commit, &c., when, in fact, it has nothing whatever of this character, and did not emanate from the Pope or Church of Rome at all; but when Henry the Fifth required money for the prosecution of his wars in France, Chicheley, then Archbishop of Canterbury, agreed to find it, by making all the monasteries and religious houses which had been impeached in the previous reign before the council at Oxford, purchase (according to their means) a *General Pardon*. The document in question is one of these pardons.

"The whole are carefully treasured by Colonel Wildman, and the eagle has been transferred to Southwell minster, where, in the chancel, it fulfils the slightly diverted purpose of being used as a lectern, or stand for a folio Bible, instead of supporting its former burden the missal.

"Before visiting the interior of the Abbey it is well to enjoy a walk through the pretty grounds, which have during the past few years been tastefully arranged and enlarged by Colonel Wildman. A gently winding path, which commands a fine view of the lower lake, leads to an aviary, in which are some beautiful specimens of the gold and silver pheasant, and after passing a rusticated Swiss cottage on the way to the kitchen gardens, my guide, the intelligent old gardener, with his well-known civility, invited me into his own dwelling to exhibit, if not the identical mysterious and inexhaustible bottle shown to her Majesty at Balmoral, yet one quite as interesting and *hitherto* as inexhaustible, viz. a bottle of port wine, which belonged to a former Lord Byron, and now more than a hundred years of age! Of course the crust and colour too have almost disappeared. Having passed through the kitchen-gardens, which are well laid out and ornamented with neat fountains, I was next attracted by a dismal-looking pond, enshrouded by some aged and venerable yews, probably as ancient as the very Abbey itself, and beneath the shade of whose 'melancholy boughs' the early occupants have, doubtless, oft reclined. At the head of this pond is a cold crystal spring, which though I suppose, if these holy men are not much libelled, must have afforded the monks more pure water than they required, was certainly much esteemed and used by Lord Byron.

"The dark woods, in which are two leaden statues of Pan and a female Satyr, very fine specimens as works of art, are next worthy of attention, chiefly because a tree is shown whereon Byron once carved his own name and that of his sister, with the date, all of which are still legible. Lest this interesting specimen of his Lordship's 'hours of idleness' should fall a victim to that love of destruction to which we English are prone, the Colonel has very properly ordered that no one shall be allowed to go near the place without a guide. The very current story of a lady (?) having cut out and carried away one or two letters of the name is pure fiction.

"These woods were planted by the 'wicked Lord Byron' before his fatal duel with Mr. Chaworth, and before the indulgence of his wayward passions had brought him to the condition of a solitary, morose, and savage misanthrope.

"The statues used to be called by the country people the old Lord's devils, and the wood in which they stand the Devil's wood.

"After crossing an interesting and picturesque part of the gardens, I arrived within the precincts of the ancient chapel, near to which stands the neat marble monument raised by Lord Byron* to denote the last resting-place of his favourite dog, whose death he thus announced to his friend Hodgson :—

" 'Boatswain is dead! he died in a state of madness on the 18th, after suffering much, yet retaining all the gentleness of his nature to the last, never attempting to do the least injury to any one near him.'

"You are aware that it was upon the death of this favourite dog that the exquisite lines, beginning

'When some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,' &c.

were written; in addition to this epitaph, the monument bears the following inscription :—

'Near this spot
are deposited the remains of one
who possessed beauty without vanity,
strength without insolence,
courage without ferocity,
and all the virtues of man without his vices.
This praise, which would be unmeaning flattery
if inscribed over human ashes,
is but a just tribute to the memory of
BOATSWAIN, a dog,
who was born at Newfoundland, May, 1803,
and died at Newstead Abbey, November 18, 1808.'

"By a will which his Lordship executed in 1811, he directed that his own body should be buried in a vault in the garden, near his faithful dog. This feeling of affection to his dumb and faithful follower, commendable in itself, seems here to have been carried beyond the bounds of reason and propriety.

"The next point of attraction in these gardens is the oak tree which the poet himself planted. It has now attained a goodly size, considering the slow growth of the oak, and bids fair to become a lasting memento of the noble bard, and to be

a shrine to which thousands of pilgrims will resort in future ages to do homage to his mighty genius. He planted it on his first arrival at Newstead, in 1798, and ever after displayed the greatest regard for its prosperity, actuated, it is said, by an impression or fancy, that as the tree flourished so should he: 'as it fares,' said he, 'so will fare my fortunes.' When he again visited the Abbey in 1807, he found his pet tree choked up with weeds and almost destroyed, which circumstance called forth those charming lines:—

'Young oak, when I planted thee deep in the ground,
I hoped that thy days would be longer than mine;
That thy dark waving branches would flourish around,
And ivy thy trunk with its mantle entwine; &c.

"In a note to Murray's edition of his works it is stated, that shortly after Colonel Wildman took possession he one day noticed this tree, and said to the servant who was with him, 'Here is a fine young oak, but it must be cut down, as it grows in an improper place.' 'I hope not, sir,' replied the man, 'for it is the one that my Lord was so fond of, because he set it himself.' Since that time the Colonel and all around have taken every possible care of it, and strangers inquire for it as the 'Byron oak,' so that it promises to share in after times the celebrity of Shakspeare's mulberry, and Pope's willow."



